I went in after this little cat. p 12.

Guernsey, Lucy E.

MEAT-EATERS,

WITH

SOME ACCOUNT

OF THEIR

HAUNTS AND HABITS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "IRISH AMY," ETC.

AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION.

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* The Leopard, the Cougar and the Panther are names applied to several animals of the same general character, but inhabiting different parts of the globe, and distinguished by some peculiarity of colour, form, or habits. The difference between them is, however, so slight, that they seem to be frequently confounded.

MEAT-EATERS.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

Miss Winston was sitting before her little table one afternoon in the beginning of summer, reading and knitting at the same time. She was an excellent knitter; and it was a constant source of amusement and wonder to her nephews and nieces to watch her flying fingers, which never hesitated or dropped a stitch or made a mistake, though she hardly ever took her eyes from the book except to narrow or count her stitches. The little table was drawn into the recess of a deep, low window, which opened upon a pretty high terrace with here and there a flower-bed set in the green grass. Beyond this terrace was a garden;

and beyond this again was a green field, which reached to the river and was kept smooth by a small flock of sheep which pastured there. There were several large trees in this meadow, besides a pretty brook; and at one end was a large rock, or rather pile of rocks, the top of which was nearly as high as the terrace upon which the house stood. All these things made it a very favourite play-ground for the children of the family; and at this time in the afternoon they were usually to be seen either under the trees or on the rocks, or else about the door of the neat little log cabin which their grandfather had built for them near the brook, or under the shadow of one of the great trees which I have mentioned.

Just at this time, however, there were none of them visible. They had all gone for a walk, intending to take the village in their way and do some errands for their aunt.

Miss Winston counted her stitches, and then, folding her work and laying it in her book for a mark, she arose, and, taking her crutch, (for she was lame,) she stepped out upon the platform under the window and

stood looking over the landscape, which was in all its summer beauty. The river was high and clear, and ran with a rippling sound, which mixed pleasantly with the noise of the wind in the woods, the lowing of the cattle and all the other country-sounds which seem to make the stillness only more quiet instead of breaking it. Presently, however, other sounds met the ear than those of the river and the cattle. A clamour of girlish and boyish voices, accompanied by the barking of a dog and the pitiful mews, or rather squalls, of a frightened kitten, caused Miss Winston to start, and to hasten, as fast as her lame steps could carry her, towards the end of the terrace, that she might see from whence the sounds proceeded, and where she arrived just in time to greet the party who were coming round the corner of the house. She uttered an exclamation of alarm as they met her view. The tallest boy of the party—a lad about fifteen years old—came first, wet from head to foot, his face bruised, dirty and covered with blood, and carrying in his arms a little gray and white kitten as wet as himself, which was squalling at the

very top of its voice. Another boy followed, holding by the collar a great dog, also dripping wet, but in the highest spirits. Two little girls completed the group, of whom the elder was trying to comfort and quiet the younger, who was crying bitterly.

"What in the world is the matter?" asked Miss Louisa. "Have you been in the water, Dick?"

"Yes, aunt," replied Richard, holding up the kitten: "I went in after this little cat."

"The boys put her in an old bowl in Short's pond, and set their dogs on her," said Annie, the oldest girl, taking up the story, "and Dick went in and got her. We sent Bruno in first; but she was afraid of him, and the other dogs fought him: so Dick went in himself and pulled her out."

"And Jack Short threw a stone at Dick and made that great mark on his face," said Sidney; "and they wanted to throw more; but Mr. Short's man came out and stopped them. And then Daisy was so scared about Dick and the kitten that she cried. Wasn't it too bad, aunt, to treat a poor kitten so?" And Sidney, who had reproved Daisy for crying, began to cry himself.

Miss Winston did not wait to hear more. She gave the kitten into Annie's charge, and hurried Dick into the house to change his clothes and to examine the wound on his face, which looked quite formidable. She was very much relieved to find that it was only a bad bruise and had not touched his eye, though it had narrowly missed it; and when she had made him comfortable she went to the nursery, whither she had sent the other children. Here she found Annie with the kitten in her lap, and the other children standing by, looking on with faces of the deepest interest as she carefully rubbed and dried its wet and dirty form with a piece of warm flannel,—an operation which the kitten seemed to enjoy very much, for she purred, and combed with her claws the piece of blanket on which she was lying, and looked up into Annie's face with half-shut eyes, as if she were very thankful. Presently she jumped down, and went of her own accord to the bowl of milk provided for her; and, after drinking as much as she wanted, she began to explore the room, examining the furniture, as is the custom of cats brought into strange places.

Daisy clapped her hands for joy. "She will live! I do believe she will live, after all! Won't she, Sidney?"

"Of course she will," returned Sidney, in rather patronizing tones. "It isn't so easy to kill a cat, I can tell you. People say they have nine lives, because they are so hardy. Isn't she pretty, aunt?"

"Very pretty," replied Miss Louisa. "If she will stay, she will come in very nicely to fill poor Jenny's place."

"She will never fill Jenny's place," said Annie, rather sorrowfully. "I shall never like another cat as I did her!—never!"

"Just as you said when Jessie died and when Punch was lost," returned Sidney; "and yet you thought just as much of the others. I would never have a pet if I were going to feel so about it, because something always does happen to them, sooner or later. But how is Dick, aunt? Is his face very bad?"

"I think he will have a black eye for a few days, perhaps, but nothing more. And now, Annie, I want you to tell me how all this happened; for I have no clear idea about it yet."

Miss Winston asked Annie instead of Sidney, not because Sidney was not equally truthful, but because Annie was so much cooler and less excitable that her stories were usually more intelligible. All the children were aware of this; and Annie was always the one called upon to give an account of any of their adventures.

"We had been walking up the hill above the saw-mill, to see if we could find any lupins in blossom," Annie began, "and we had got a great many; and then we thought we would come round by the mill-pond, because Daisy wanted to see the frogs and fishes. You know you said we might go that way if Dick went with us."

"I know," said Miss Louisa.

"Well, when we came round from behind the mill we saw Short's boy, and two others, shouting and setting their dogs on something in the water; and presently we saw that it was this kitten in an old wooden bowl. Dick sent Bruno in after her first; but she was as much afraid of him as she was of the others, and the other dogs attacked him, so he could not do any thing. So Dick jumped in himself, with all his clothes on,

and brought the little thing out. The boys tried to set the dogs on him, and then they began to abuse him and us, and finally Jack Short threw a stone and hit Dick's face and almost knocked him down. Then Sidney pulled off his jacket and was going to fight Jack; but that tall man in the mill came out and sent the boys off and told Jack he would tell his father. So we came home as fast as we could."

"I'll pay him off some day," muttered Sidney, clenching his fist; "I'll teach him to throw stones at girls!"

"Yes! you would look well fighting Jack Short!" said Annie. "I would not touch him with one of his father's boards."

"Upon my word, Annie, I don't know which to admire most,—your spirit or Sidney's," said Miss Winston. "Do you think, Sidney, that fighting him would be very likely to teach him to be gentlemanly and humane?"

"I don't know, aunt," replied Sidney, blushing; "but I know if any one acts so I always do want to fight him,—especially if he abuses any little helpless thing. I never

see a man abuse a horse without wanting to knock him over."

"It is a natural feeling, I know," said Miss Louisa; "but is it the best way? How many wrongs does it take to make a right?"

"All the wrongs in the world wouldn't make a right, I suppose," said Sidney.

"Then your adding to Jack's wrong the wrong of 'thrashing' him would not make the matter better, would it?"

"Well, but, aunt, you don't know how hard it is, because women don't have such feelings."

"Don't they?" asked Miss Louisa, smiling.

"Well, anyway, they can't thrash people if they want to; so it is all the same. And I don't think it is any worse to want to whip people than it is to despise them so."

"What elegant words you do use, Sidney!" said Annie, disdainfully.

"Never mind my words," retorted Sidney. "I say it is not any worse to feel as I do than to despise folks as you do. And I know I don't want to whip half so many folks as you turn up your nose at: so I am

not so bad as you, after all, Miss Perfection."

"When both are wrong it is unnecessary to debate which is the most so," said Miss Winston, gravely. "Annie knows very well what I think of such pride; and you know that it is not proper to speak so to any one, much less to your cousin. But we will let it drop for the present; and you had better prepare for tea, which is just ready."

Richard and Annie Winston, and Sidney and Margaret (or, as she was usually called, Daisy) Whipple, were grandchildren of old Squire Winston, of Cedar Meadows. Richard's father was a sea-captain and very much away from home; and since their mother's death, about a year before, he and his sister had been constantly with their grandfather. Dick was about fifteen, and Annie fourteen. They were somewhat alike in their dispositions, but with this very important difference,—that Dick, though naturally much more impulsive, was much more under the dominion of principle, than his sister. He had been a very different boy ever since his mother's long sickness and death; and Aunt Louisa, who knew him best, thought

him truly a Christian. Annie was a good girl, too, and had some excellent qualities, such as truthfulness and industry and great faithfulness in whatever she undertook to do. She was the best scholar in the family, —not excepting Richard, who was a year older,—and this, not because she was the brightest in capacity, but because she had the most application. Her great faults were pride, jealousy and a certain self-will which made it very difficult for her to acknowledge herself in the wrong. Her great friend was her cousin Sidney Whipple, who was as different from herself as can be imagined, being very impulsive, warm-tempered, not very fond of study, and wholly destitute of that proper pride in himself, as Annie considered it, which would prevent him from playing with all sorts of boys and associating with all sorts of people. With all his faults, Sidney was more of a favourite in the family than any of the children. He was, as we said, not remarkable for scholarship; but he liked reading, especially books of travels and voyages; and his great ambition was to go to sea with his uncle Harry. Richard had a grown-up brother at

the West; and there was another family of grandchildren, who lived in Boston and were only occasional visitors at the Meadows. Daisy Whipple was a little, delicate, six-years-old girl, the youngest grandchild, and the pet and plaything of all. The Whipples were orphans, and had lived with their grandfather several years. All these children had a governess, who taught them several hours a day; but this lady was at present visiting her relations, and her pupils were enjoying a vacation.

Miss Winston found after tea that Richard had some fever and must be contented to remain in bed for the evening; and Dick was contented to obey, for he felt pretty stiff after his exertions, and his face and head ached from the effects of the blow. He got up to breakfast the next morning, but found he had very little appetite; and he lay upon the sofa all day, unable to read, and feeling very unwell indeed. The little kitten, now apparently quite recovered, seemed to feel a great deal of sympathy for him, and really appeared as if she were trying to comfort and entertain her preserver.

"She acts as if she knew that it was Dick

that pulled her out," said Sidney, after he had vainly tried to coax the kitten away from the sofa. "I wonder if she does?"

"I should think it very likely," replied Miss Winston. "Cats often show a great deal of gratitude to those who are kind to them; and she certainly has every reason to be thankful to Dick that a cat can have."

"Yes, little kitty, all your troubles would have been over by this time if he had not taken your part. No cat was ever in a greater strait."

"It seems as though she had been used to being petted," said Annie, caressing the little thing and dropping the end of her handkerchief for her to play with. "I wonder where she came from?"

"I wish kittens could talk!" said Daisy.

"So she could tell us her adventures! I wish she would, I declare!" exclaimed Sidney. "Come, aunt, tell us the adventures of the kitten. You have not told us a story in a long time."

"Not since the day before yesterday," replied Miss Winston, smiling.

"Did you tell us one then? I don't remember what it was about," said Sidney,

innocently. "What are you doing to her claws, Dick?"

"I am trying to see how she curls them up so close," replied Richard. "See; now you would not know she had any claws, her paws are so soft and smooth; and yet they are as sharp as needles," he continued, hastily withdrawing his hand,—for pussy, annoyed with the examination of her talons, had shown symptoms of displaying them in her own way.

"That's the trouble of playing with cats," said Sidney: "they are always showing their claws."

"That's the trouble of playing with some other folks," retorted Annie, who always resented as personal any affront offered to her pets.

"Take a lesson from it, then, Annie, and don't be so fond of showing your own claws," said Miss Winston.

"Aunt," said Richard, rather hastily, as if to turn the conversation, "are not lions and cats something the same kind of animals?"

"Oh, Dick! Cats and lions! A lion is forty times as large as a cat."

"So is Bruno twenty times as large as Aunt Meredith's King Charles spaniel," replied Richard; "and yet they are both dogs. But I am sure I have read in some book that cats and lions are the same, or nearly the same."

"You are quite right, Richard," said Miss Winston. "They both belong to the same genus or family in the animal-kingdom. The lion is the largest, and the domestic cat perhaps the smallest, of this family; but there are many strong points of resemblance."

"What do you mean, aunt, by saying that they are of the same genus?" asked Annie.

"I mean that they resemble each other in so many particulars as to be classed together in the divisions usually made of the animal-kingdom."

"How are animals classed?" asked Richard. "I always had a general idea that it was by means of their teeth or their food; but I am not clear about it. I wish, Aunt Louisa, you would give us some lectures upon Natural History."

"I declare, Dick, that is a grand idea!" said Annie. "I have always wanted to

learn Natural History; but the books about it that I have looked into have had so many hard words in them that I have always been discouraged. But you always make every thing so plain and easy to understand that I am sure I could learn it from you."

"And tell us plenty of stories," said Sidney: "that is the best part of lectures, I think."

"I should be very happy to do so," said Miss Louisa, "if you think you can be enough interested in the subject to study a little and to be contented with some dry details of classes and orders."

"What is the use of the classes, aunt?" asked Sidney.

"The use of them is to arrange our knowledge systematically, so that we may be able to find what we want more easily," replied Miss Winston. "We may compare them to the shelves in the china-closet or the divisions and drawers in the store-room. You know we keep table-cloths in one drawer and napkins in another, besides having shelves for the spare blankets and comforters, a rack to hang up the hams and dried beef,

and boxes for the sugar and the flour. All these take some trouble to learn at first; but in the end they save a great deal more. Think what a time I should have, when company comes suddenly, if I had to look over all the blankets and sheets to find the napkins, and to take every thing out of my own drawers to get at the spare table-spoons."

"That's the way Sidney has to do," laughed Annie. "He took all the things out of his desk the other day to find one little water-wheel; and, after all, it was not there."

"No, indeed: it was in your work-basket, Miss Annie! I found it there myself; and you as much as owned that you put it there."

"Hush, Sidney! children should not interrupt," said Annie, with dignity. "Do be still," she added, pathetically, as Sidney laughed. "Now, be good, Sidney, and I will finish your flag to-morrow; I will, truly. Sit down on this cushion; and don't kick with your feet nor play with your fingers, but listen as if you wanted to learn something."

Sidney sat down and folded his arms de-

murely, while his eyes sparkled with suppressed fun. Miss Winston continued:—

"Now shall we go directly to the stories, or shall we have a little scientific classification first?"

"Oh, let us have the classification first," exclaimed Richard and Annie, together.

"I say so too," said Sidney. "When I have a piece of pie, I always want to eat the crust—which I don't so much like—first. So let us have the hard names first, if you please, aunt."

"Well, then," said Miss Winston, "you must know that the whole animal-kingdom—by which we mean all the living creatures in the world, of every sort and size—is divided into four great departments. These departments are VERTEBRATA, ARTICULATA, MOLLUSKS and RADIATA. Can you remember these four names?"

"I guess I can, if I know what they mean," said Sidney.

"I will give you a definition and an example of each, and then you may give me one, if you can. The first—vertebrated animals—have a backbone and a bony skeleton. Can you give me an example of this class?"

"Cats"—"birds"—and "fishes"—were some of the examples given.

"And men," added Richard.

"Are men animals?" asked Daisy, who had not spoken a word before. "I did not know that."

"Men are animals, and something besides animals," said Richard, "because they have something that other animals have not."

"Very true," replied Miss Winston. "Articulata are those animals which are divided into segments or rings and have no interior skeleton, such as insects, crabs and lobsters, and earth-worms."

"I always thought lobsters were fish," said Annie.

"No: they are very different from fish, which are vertebrated animals. The Mollusks are soft, cold-blooded animals, and are usually enclosed in a shell, like oysters and snails. The Radiata, the last of all, have their parts radiating, or arranged round a centre, and are the simplest of all in their construction, such as the star and jelly fishes, and those curious animals the sea-nettles. With these three latter departments we have nothing to do at present, but will con-

fine our attention to the first-mentioned. What was it?"

"Vertebrata," said Sidney and Annie together.

"This department is divided into four classes,—mammals, or those which suckle their young, birds, reptiles and fishes. Now, to which department does our pussy belong?"

"The first," said Annie; "because she has a backbone."

"And to which class?"

"Mammals," said Dick; "because cats suckle their kittens."

"Very good, so far. This class is subdivided again into twelve orders, which are often included in three, namely, Carnivora, or those which eat flesh, often called, also, beasts of prey; Herbivora, or those which eat vegetable food; and Cetacia, or warm-blooded animals living in the water, as whales."

"I thought whales were fish, anyhow," said Sidney.

"No more than lobsters are,—nor so much. How, then, will you locate our pussy,

Sidney? Begin at the beginning, and see if you can go through them all."

"Well, let me see. She is a vertebrated animal, because she has a backbone; a mammal; carnivorous, because she eats meat; and——I believe that is all."

"That is all I have told you. The two remaining divisions are genus,—which includes such animals as have certain resemblances, like those of the genus Felis, which includes all that have claws which can be drawn back, the same kind of eyes, and the same number of teeth,—and species, which includes all of a particular kind, such as felis Leo, which includes all the lions. Now, let us go over the divisions once more."

"Departments first," said Annie; "then classes, then orders, then genus, and lastly species."

"What a memory you have!" said Sidney, admiringly: "I wish I had."

"Your memory would be as good as mine, and better, if you would only listen," replied Annie, "but you never half attend. And what else, aunt?"

"I think that is enough for to-night," replied Miss Winston. "To-morrow we will

continue the subject; and, as our time will be rather limited, we will confine our attention entirely to the first order, named the carnivora, or, if you like it better, the meat-eaters; and, in honour of our new pussy, we will begin to-morrow evening with domestic cats."

"But do tell me, aunt: are all the animals in the world divided as you have said, so that when you see any animal you can tell in a moment whether it has a backbone or is formed in rings, &c.?"

"Certainly; and so are trees and flowers, and stones and clouds, all formed in such a way as to be placed in orders and classes; and the laws which govern their forms and habits are as uniform and perfect as those which govern the stars. They must be so; for they are the workmanship of Him who is revealed to us as the God of order and not of confusion."

CHAPTER II.

THE DOMESTIC CAT.

THE next evening the children assembled themselves in the parlour after tea, instead of running out to play as usual; and Mr. Winston looked around surprised as he saw them all sitting quietly down as if prepared to listen.

"What is the meaning of this?" he asked. "What has made you so sedate all at once?"

"We are going to hear some stories, grandfather," replied Sidney. "Aunt Louisa is going to tell us about beasts of prey."

Annie looked as if she thought Sidney's manner of stating the case hardly dignified enough.

"Not stories exactly, grandfather, but a sort of lectures upon Natural History. She told us about the divisions last night."

"What divisions, my child?"

"The divisions of the animal-kingdom," said Sidney. "Aunt said they were of use, like the drawers in the store-room, to sort and put away our knowledge in. But why do they use such hard words, grandfather? Why could they not use English words as well as Latin? They would be so much easier to remember."

"Easier to you, perhaps, but not to people who don't know English and who do know Latin," answered Dick. "I suppose the reason is that Latin is a sort of common language. Learned men in all countries know it and understand the names at once as soon as they see them. Is not that so, grandfather?"

"I believe you are right, my son."

"But why could they not take some language now in use?" persisted Annie. "I am sure French or English is much easier to learn than Latin."

"There might be some difficulty and jealousy in deciding which language should be chosen in that case; and that is avoided by the use of a dead or unspoken language," observed her grandfather. "The people of

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each nation would naturally prefer their own tongue; and who would decide? I think this is an excellent plan of Aunt Louisa's; and I hope you will be very attentive and learn all you can. What is your subject to-night?" he asked, as Miss Louisa entered the room with her arms full of books, closely followed by pussy, who had set herself about propitiating the heads of the house, as if she knew that her stay depended upon their pleasure.

"To begin with cats, in compliment to our little stranger here," Miss Louisa said; "and the domestic cat and her relations form our subject this evening."

"When you get as far as panthers and wild-cats, I shall perhaps be able to give you some anecdotes," said Mr. Winston. "So far as cats go, I am sure you are fully equal to the subject. Meantime, I shall go into the library and read my newspaper."

"The domestic cat," said Miss Louisa, as soon as her audience were comfortably settled, "has been supposed by some naturalists to be descended from the common wild-cat of Great Britain and the West of Europe. This was for a long time the ge-

nerally-received opinion; but Mr. Ruppel, in his travels in Nubia, discovered a small species of wild-cat, smaller than the European, which corresponds in many more particulars than the English; and this is now more generally supposed to have been the parent of the domestic cat. It is probable that they may be derived from several different sources; and the tortoise-shell cat is often called the Spanish cat. It is certain that the Egyptians had domestic cats at a very early period and held them in great esteem, as they figure largely in the paintings on the interior of the tombs, and many mummies of them are found, carefully embalmed."

"Do you think they worshipped them, aunt?" asked Daisy.

"I am not sure that they worshipped them; but there is no doubt that they treated them as sacred,—perhaps something as the Hindoos do the Brahminic bulls and certain kinds of monkeys. In ancient times they were very rare in the West of Europe, and high prices were asked for them. Nine hundred and forty-eight years after Christ, Hoel, the good king of Wales,

enacted a law regulating the price of cats and enumerating the good qualities of which they ought to be possessed. Thus, the price of a kitten before it could see was one penny sterling,—which was a much larger sum in those days than it is now. Till satisfactory proof could be obtained of its having killed a mouse, the price was two-pence, and, after that, according to its good qualities. A cat should have her claws whole, should be perfect in the senses of hearing and seeing, be a good mouser and a good nurse; and if she failed in any of these qualities the seller was to forfeit to the buyer one-third of her value. If any one stole or killed the cat that guarded the king's granary, he was to forfeit a milch-cow, or as much grain as, when poured over the cat suspended by the tail, its head touching the floor, would cover it entirely."

"That does not look as if they were only wild-cats tamed, does it?" said Richard; "because they would not be very likely to ask so much for what any one could have by merely taking trouble enough."

"True," replied Miss Louisa; "and the fact that the name applied to them is nearly

the same in all European languages, and all derived from the Latin, seems also to show that it was probably introduced into the West and South of Europe by the Romans."

"Do you know whether there is any account of cats being brought to this country, aunt?" asked Sidney.

"I do not, my dear: I have never seen any. They are frequently brought over on board ships, to destroy the rats and mice which always abound in vessels. Perhaps some sea-captain imported two or three litters of kittens as a venture, or some little girl in London or Bristol sent one as a present to her cousins in this country."

"How glad she must have been to see it!" said Daisy, with sparkling eyes. "I wonder what she said. I wish, aunt, you would write a story about the first kitten that came to America."

"Perhaps I will some time; or you may ask Dick to do it. He is the story-writer, you know."

Dick blushed and smiled. He was rather shy of having any one know that he wrote; but he had once or twice read stories to the children, who thought him equal to

Sir Walter Scott at least. "How large are domestic cats generally?" he asked.

"The medium length is said to be about two feet nine inches, measuring from the tip of the nose to the end of the tail; but it varies a good deal in different individuals. Our Maltese cat Sam—which was the largest cat I ever saw—measured twenty-one inches exclusive of his tail. This kitten, which I should say was about two-thirds grown, is fifteen inches long, exclusive of her tail, which is nine inches more."

"How did you find out, aunt?" asked Sidney.

"I measured her with my yard ribbon," answered Miss Winston; "and very indignant she was at the liberty. As the common cat possesses nearly all the traits of the genus Felis, we may as well describe them in connection with her. All the animals of the family possess a smooth fur, which is sometimes nearly uniform in colour, but often beautifully marked and variegated by dark and black spots. Their muscles are well developed, especially those of the fore-part of the body, so that they are exceedingly strong in proportion to their size. A cat

will carry off a piece of meat nearly as large as herself without much difficulty. They have very strong, sharp claws, which are provided with powerful muscles, so arranged that when not in use they may be drawn back into a sheath, which serves to keep them sharp and fit for use and contributes to the noiseless tread which is one of the principal characteristics of these animals. I think there is only one exception to the rule,—the chetah, or hunting leopard. The tongue is covered with small horny points turning backwards, which gives it the rough feeling you notice when the kitten licks your hand.

"The eyes are large and bright, and are usually of a yellowish or greenish tinge: sometimes they are gray or brown; and I once had a black cat whose eyes were bright blue. Some of the white cats have the eyes of different colours,—generally a blue eye and a yellow one. The pupil of the eye is not round like your's, but elliptical or oval, being the largest up and down. The size of it varies very much with the degree of light. In the dark it seems to cover the whole eye; while in a bright sun-

light it is reduced to a mere line. It also dilates greatly upon any sudden excitement. It is owing to this great sensibility to light that cats are able to see very well in places which would appear perfectly dark to you and me. The sense of hearing is very acute, as you may easily satisfy yourself by experiment."

"What is the use of their whiskers?" asked Annie.

"They are supposed to be of service in warning them of obstacles, and thus enabling them to pass noiselessly through brushwood and thickets, where the sound even of a breaking twig would give warning to their prey. You will observe that they extend to the width of the body, and seem very sensitive. The bristles above the eyes have the same use, and preserve the eyes themselves from injury.

"The gait of all the cat-tribe is graceful, and in the larger kinds majestic, and all their motions are agile and free. In young kittens, especially, the spine seems to be made of something more elastic than India-rubber. They usually lie in wait for their prey in situations which it frequents; and nothing

can exceed their patience when so employed."

"I know that!" interrupted Sidney. "I have seen old Punch sit for hours at a hole where he had seen a mouse go in."

"Oh, Sidney, not for hours!" said Annie. "How many hours?"

"I don't know how many, but I know I have seen him watch for hours at a time," persisted Sidney. "Haven't you, aunt?"

"Yes, Sidney; I do not think your statement at all exaggerated; and, as you may observe, they return to the same place again and again, and seem to feel very much disappointed if they do not find something to reward them. If they catch a sight of their prey at a distance, they crouch close to the ground, and, as it were, flattening their bodies and lowering their heads, they advance with rapid but silent steps till they are within reach, and then spring forward with a quick bound, which rarely fails to secure their victim."

"There is one thing I don't like about cats," said Richard. "I mean the way they play with poor animals and torment them

before they kill them. It seems such real cruelty."

"I don't believe they mean to be cruel," said Annie, prompt as ever in the defence of her favourites. "They don't know that it hurts them."

"I don't know about that," replied Sidney. "They never do so to birds. They bite their heads off directly, because they know the bird can get away; and so they do to big rats. It is only little things which cannot defend themselves that they play with and tease."

Annie now looked really vexed. "They do just so with balls and pieces of paper," she said; "and I don't believe they do it to be cruel. Do you, aunt?"

"I do not know, my dear, I am sure," replied Miss Winston. "It looks very much like it, certainly; but I hardly think it likely that they would do it for that reason alone."

"I used to think I never could like Punch so well again after I saw him play with a mouse one day," said Sydney. "And I never can like cats as well as dogs, for that very reason."

"Your pets never do any thing wrong," said Annie, half to herself.

Sidney looked surprised and hurt, for he had no idea of annoying his cousin by his remarks. He knew by experience, however, that when Annie was in a pet it was always best to leave her to herself, when she usually became ashamed of her ill humour before a great while; whereas, if anybody noticed it, she seemed to feel herself obliged to maintain it as long as possible for the mere sake of consistency.

"People say," said Richard, "that cats care much more for places than for people, and hardly ever form strong attachments. Do you think it is true?"

"Not ordinarily," replied Miss Winston. "It is very true that, generally speaking, cats dislike change of place, and, other things being equal, would rather remain where they have been brought up; but I have seen many cats, young and old, that made no objection to removing any distance with the family to which they were attached, and showed no inclination to return to their old home, even though the distance was very short. Sonnini, a French traveller in

Egypt, had a cat which accompanied him in all his journeyings and was never uneasy at any change so long as she was with her master. I recollect also reading, in Miss Roberts's entertaining book upon India, of an English officer who had for pets a cat, a small antelope and a Persian greyhound, which were strongly attached to him and to each other. They ate, played and slept together, and always went to the gate of the enclosure to wait for their master. They accompanied him upon many long marches and excursions; and the cat never seemed to care for change of place, so long as her master and her two friends were with her."

"How I should like to have seen them!" said Sidney. "Would not you, Annie?" Annie nodded. "But I did not know that cats and dogs were ever friends. People say of quarrelsome persons that they fight like cats and dogs, you know; and almost all dogs will kill cats."

"I believe that is only because they are taught to do so," said Miss Winston. "I have seen cats and dogs as good friends as those I have just described. You re-

member Mark and Lufra at your grandfather Elliot's, Dick?"

"Tell us about them, won't you?" asked Sidney. "It seems to me I remember Lufra:—a great yellow cat, wasn't she?"

"Yes; and Mark was a great, black, rough dog. He formed a strong attachment to Lufra, or Lufra to him, when she was a very little kitten. Mark had learned to kill cats before he came to us; and when we got this kitten everybody said we never could keep it,—that Mark would kill it the first chance he had; but grandmother said she knew she could teach him better. So she took the kitten in her arms and went into the kitchen where Mark was. As soon as he saw it, he began to bristle up; but grandmother sat down and called him to her. He came, rather unwillingly. 'Mark,' said she, 'I want you to look at this kitten. This is my kitten, and you must not hurt it; you must take good care of it and not let any other dog touch it. Do you hear?' Mark turned his head clear away and licked his jaws with his tongue; but she set the kitten down under his nose and made him look at her. I was frightened; for I thought he would

snap her up in a moment; but he did not. He just turned and walked away in a very dignified manner and lay down under the table. It was not long after that I saw Supa playing with his tail; and after a while they got to be the greatest friends imaginable, and played, ate and slept together, till Supa was an old, old cat; and when she died it seemed as though Mark could not be comforted."

"Supa was a remarkable cat," said Aunt Louisa.

"Somehow, all our cats are remarkable," said Richard, laughingly. "We have the most wonderful cats and dogs and horses I ever heard of, I think. I suppose it is because we pay so much attention to them."

"Every man thinks his own geese swans," said Sidney, sententiously.

"Don't use proverbs, Sidney," returned Annie, reprovingly: "it is vulgar."

"Then grandfather is the most vulgar person I know," replied Sidney, laughing; "for he is always using them."

"Grandfather and you are two very different persons," said Annie.

"I must say, I do not object to a judicious

use of proverbs," observed Miss Winston. "There is much of the wisdom of long experience stored up in them; and they often say a great deal in a few words. But, Richard,—to return to our subject,—what was the story about Supa's going shooting with your brother? I have heard, but I do not remember distinctly."

"It was one summer in cherry-time," said Richard, "and there were such flocks of birds in the garden that we seemed to have no prospect of having any fruit left for ourselves. If they had done like the robins,—taken a cherry here and there and eaten it in a decent manner,—we would not have quarrelled with them; but the little things would peck every cherry on the tree without eating one. They cared nothing at all for bells or scarecrows. Harry and I put up a figure of a man with a gun—a real gun—in one of the trees, thinking it would keep them off a while, at any rate; but it was not ten minutes before a dozen birds were seated on the gun itself, flapping their wings, and screaming and pecking with all their might. I could not help laughing to see them,—though it was provoking, too."

The Scare Crow. p. 46.

"But about the cat," said Sidney, impatiently.

"Well," continued Dick, "after our scarecrow failed, there was nothing for us but to shoot as many as we could, in hopes of scaring them away and saving at least some of the fruit; and Harry and I destroyed—I cannot tell how many. After a while, Supa, who was at first very much afraid of the gun, began to find out what we were about, and made up her mind to have a share of the sport herself. She used to follow us round the garden, always keeping close behind. When we were about to shoot a bird, she would crouch close to the ground ready for a spring; and she often caught the bird before it fell. After she had eaten as many as she wanted, she would carry them away and lay them up in heaps, apparently just for the fun of the thing."

Sidney drew a long breath.

"If any one but you had told that story, Dick, I should say it was a large one. How did the cat know what you were about?"

"I suppose she used her eyes and her understanding," replied Richard. "She saw that whenever the gun went off a bird fell;

and it did not require much reasoning to put the two things together."

"Can cats reason?" asked Daisy, doubtfully.

"To a certain extent, no doubt, they can," replied Miss Winston. "We see instances of it every day. Jenny reasoned when she taught her kittens to sit up and beg as Dick had taught her. She knew that when she begged in this way for food she almost always got it; and she concluded from that fact that it would be a good thing for her kittens to have the same accomplishment. I used often to be amused at seeing how persevering she was in setting them in the proper position."

"Many people say that cats can never be taught any thing," said Annie.

"That is a mistake," returned her aunt. "They are, it must be confessed, not nearly so docile as dogs, and they need to be coaxed and rewarded, not driven or threatened. They are exceedingly sensitive to kindness, for the most part, and show a great deal of gratitude to those who are serviceable to them. Witness Jessy's affection for Dick."

"Yes: she thinks more of Dick than of any of us," said Annie; and she did not look very well pleased,—for she could be jealous even of the affections of a cat. Jealousy was Annie's besetting sin, and most of her other faults of temper grew out of it. It showed itself oftener towards her brother than towards any other member of the family. She did not want him to like any one else; and sometimes it seemed as though she did not want any one to like him. Sidney was the only one who ventured to laugh at her about this failing; and she did not like it very well even from him.

"My blue-eyed black cat was a notable instance of this kind of gratitude," continued Miss Winston. "She was a wild creature, with long, shining black hair, a very long tail and the brightest of blue eyes. Altogether, I think she was the ugliest specimen of the feline race I ever set eyes on. She was, as I have said, very wild, and wandered about the cellars and outhouses without ever coming into the house. One night, as mother and myself were making the rounds of the house before bed-

time, we heard a most pitiful mewing in the cellar. We tried to discover from what place the sound came, for a long time without success. At last I looked into a pork-barrel, which had by some mischance been left uncovered; and there I found this kitten. It had climbed up on the only piece of pork that was left in the brine, and this kept its head out; and here it was clamouring for help. I took it out, and, after wiping the poor little creature as well as I could, it scampered away. The next day, as I was sitting upon the steps at the door, this kitten came running through the hall and jumped on my shoulder, and from that moment was my firm friend,—almost my shadow; for it followed me everywhere, in doors and out, though it would let no one else touch it, and scratched your aunt Priscilla severely one day for no other offence than wearing a dress like mine and sitting in my place. I became very much attached to the little creature, ugly and cross-grained as it undeniably was; and I felt very sorry when an accident finally put an end to its life.

"There is this great difference between the affection of the dog and that of the cat:

the former often shows great attachment to an unkind and even brutal master, and no amount of ill usage seems to change his feelings; but the cat must be well and even respectfully treated to insure her regard. She never likes a person who is not kind to her. She seems, however, often to make an exception in favour of young children, from whom she will endure any amount of pulling and poking with the utmost complacency, seeming to consider that they are not to be reckoned accountable."

"What sharp teeth they have!" said Richard, examining Jessie's mouth,—much against her will. "How many kinds of teeth have they, aunt?"

"Cats, like almost all other quadrupeds, have three kinds of teeth. The teeth of animals, as you know, Richard, form one great means of distinguishing the different orders; and from them those who are learned in such matters can discover with certainty what is the nature of their food. The number of each kind of teeth, expressed in the manner of a fraction, is called the Dental Formula. Cats have all three kinds of teeth, namely, incisors or cutting-

teeth, which are the small, sharp teeth you see in the front of the kitten's mouth and of your own; canine teeth, which are those long, sharp teeth at the sides, and correspond to what you call your eye-teeth; and molars or grinders, which are those at the sides,—double teeth, as they are generally called. These last are they which afford the most ready means of distinguishing the habits of an animal, whether carnivorous or not. Thus, in the carnivora the teeth have sharp cutting edges, and shut by each other like the blades of a pair of scissors, so as to tear or cut to pieces the flesh which constitutes the food of the animals. These teeth are always accompanied by muscular and hairy paws, and claws more or less sharp. In the herbivora, on the contrary, the molar teeth are broad and flat, with ridges upon the upper surface, and adapted for grinding their vegetable food, aided by the horizontal movement of their jaws. They have frequently no canine teeth, and very often incisors or cutting-teeth only in the lower jaw, while the upper jaw is callous. The incisors, aided by the tongue, gather the grass and transfer it to

the molars, which grind it. Herbivorous animals never have claws, and are often provided with horns, which are never found on the carnivora."

"I have read a good story about that," said Richard; "but I don't know whether it is true or not."

"Never mind that," said Sidney: "let us have the story, at any rate."

"My story relates to Baron Cuvier," said Richard. "One of his friends, knowing how calm and courageous he was, undertook to frighten him. So he dressed himself up, as frightfully as he could, in skins, with an immense pair of horns upon his head, and hoofs upon his feet; and, thus attired, and carrying a light in his hand, he went to the bedside of his friend and announced himself as an evil spirit come to devour him."

"I think it was very wicked to do so," said Daisy, gravely.

"Well, never mind that now. What did he do, Dick?"

"The baron raised himself upon his elbow and gravely regarded the intruder from head to foot. 'Devour me?' said he, coolly: 'quite impossible,—with those horns and

hoofs. Can't be carnivorous: impossible!' and coolly lay down again and went to sleep."

"I wonder if that is true," said Daisy, who was a notorious coward. "I don't believe it is. Do you, aunt?"

"Indeed, my dear, I cannot say. Baron Cuvier was a very great and good man, and would not be likely to be alarmed by any such foolish device. At any rate, the answer was a very good one, and, as Dick says, it illustrates our subject very well. But to return to the teeth of our cats. All animals of the feline family have six cutting or incisor teeth above and below, two canine teeth in each jaw, and the molar teeth are eight in the upper jaw and six in the lower, —making thirty teeth in all. This dental formula would be expressed thus:" and Miss Winston wrote it on a small porcelain slate and held it up for inspection. It read as follows:—Incisors, $\frac{6}{6}$: Canines, $\frac{1}{1}:\frac{1}{1}$; Molars, $\frac{4}{3}:\frac{4}{3}$. "The numbers above the line show the upper teeth, those below the lower, and the separation shows how many there are on each side. It would be well for you to remember

The Wild Cat. p. 55

this formula, as it is an ordinary and very convenient form of expression."

"Are there any wild animals of the cat-kind at all like common cats," asked Dick.

"Yes, several. The wild-cat of Europe resembles the domestic cat in so many particulars that many people have supposed that the latter were only a variety of the former somewhat modified by being domesticated. Nevertheless, there are several important differences, as you may see by this print;" and Miss Louisa held up a print of the European wild-cat. "It is larger and stouter than the common cat, and its paws especially are very muscular. The tail bears about the same proportion in length to the body, but is thicker, and increases in size, instead of tapering, towards the tip. The fur is thick and rather woolly, of a dark, grayish-yellow or sometimes a bluish-gray colour, and is marked upon the sides and legs with indistinct black bars. It is very wild in its habits, and is only found in thickly-wooded tracts abounding with rocks and precipices, which afford a shelter to it while rearing its young. In England they are now becoming very rare, and are found, I

believe, only in the rugged districts of Cumberland and Westmoreland; but in Scotland and Ireland they are still so numerous as to occasion considerable inconvenience to the farmer by destroying lambs and young pigs. On the continent of Europe they are often found, and their fur is valued for many uses."

"Is the lynx an animal of the cat-kind?" asked Annie.

"Yes: it is usually placed last in the family, and seems, as it were, to connect the cats and dogs."

"I have heard people called lynx-eyed," observed Sidney. "I suppose that is because lynxes are so sharp-sighted."

"Many wonderful stories used to be told about their power of vision. It does not, however, appear from what is at present known of the lynx tribe, that they are endued with any sharper sight than others of the cat family. The appearance of their eyes, which are very large, bright and searching in their expression, may have easily given rise to this notion. There are several varieties of the lynx, inhabiting different parts of the world, and varying somewhat

The Lynx. p. 57.

in their personal appearance. Thus, the caracal, which inhabits Asia, has rather a slender body, a long tail, and very long pointed ears, which, during a part of the season at least, are adorned with tufts or pencils of long hair on the tips, which give a peculiar smartness to its appearance. It is of a reddish-brown colour, and is about two feet nine inches long, including the tail. The Canada lynx—which is also found in Maine and New Hampshire—is about three feet three inches long, with a short tail: it has long fur, which is dark gray above and white beneath, and short, somewhat rounded, ears. It is rather a timid animal, and is easily killed by a blow on the back; and it hunts only birds and small animals, never attacking man. When angry, it spits like a cat,—only much louder. It is much valued for its fur; and many are destroyed every year. There are two or three other species of lynx inhabiting this continent; but there seems to be some confusion respecting them, and they have not hitherto been very exactly distinguished. The common European lynx resembles the last-named in many particulars, and is also valu-

able on account of its fur. And now I think it is about time to close the lecture for to-night, as I see that both Sidney and Daisy look sleepy. What do you do with the little cat at night, Dick?"

"I put her in the wood-house last night," replied Dick; "but she made such a noise that I think I will put her in the carriage-house to-night. She can sleep on the carriage-cushions if she pleases; and, if she mews, it will not disturb any one."

Richard accordingly carried her out and deposited her in the carriage,—which might have been supposed a sufficiently comfortable lodging for a homeless kitten. But Pussy did not think so, or else she was afraid to sleep alone after all the stories she had heard. About two o'clock in the morning, Annie, who slept with Daisy in the nursery, was awakened by the latter pulling her arm and saying, in a whisper, "Annie, Annie! Wake up! What is that noise?"

"I don't hear any thing," said Annie, sleepily. "It was only the wind."

"No, but listen!" persisted Daisy. "I am sure I heard something scratching against

the outside of the window. There! What can it be?"

Annie, now fully roused, did listen, and distinctly heard a sound as of some one scratching the glass with their nails. "Won't you knock on the wall and call the boys?" whispered Daisy, who (never very courageous) began to be very much frightened at these mysterious sounds. "I do believe some one is breaking in." And she covered up her head, determined not to see the danger, at any rate.

"Hush! Wait a minute!" said Annie. She listened a moment, and then said, "Who's there?" "Meew!" said a little voice in reply; and again came the nails against the window.

"It is that abused little cat," said Annie, laughing. "Don't you know her mew? Don't cry, you foolish child!" she continued, striking a light. "It is only the kitten. Uncover your head, and you will see her on the outside of the window. I will let her in; and then I suppose she will be quiet."

"Meaow," said the kitty, more urgently than before, and as if giving promise of good behaviour. Annie opened the window, and

she was soon on the bed, purring and rolling over, as if she hardly knew how to express her joy. Finally, by dint of some pushing and a few energetic pats on the head, Annie succeeded in making her lie down on the outside of the bed at a respectful distance, and there she was purring very contentedly when they went to sleep; but, when they waked in the morning, Kitty was curled down in the bed between Annie and Daisy, with her head nestled under Daisy's chin and one white paw stretched out and resting upon the little girl's round red cheek.

Of course Kitty's adventure was the subject of conversation at breakfast; and much wonderment was expressed by the children how she found her way to the nursery-window.

"She must have got through one of the little windows into the stable," said Dick, "then into the cow-house, and out through the hole that was cut for the hens, and so up to the house, and up on the roof by the wood-pile. I cannot imagine how she knew where to go, or how to find her way by such a roundabout passage."

"Cats are famous for that," remarked

Mr. Winston. "They can find their way to a place where they have once been, even if they are carried away in a bag so that they cannot see the road. I remember when I was a boy at home we had a cat that was very troublesome, and it was necessary to get rid of her; so, rather than have her killed, one of the men took her in a box and carried her away to the neighbouring city, where he let her out. But the next morning the cat sat upon the steps as usual, waiting to be let in; and after two or three such experiments she was left in peace."

"Phœbe made a great fuss about my letting Kitty into the room," said Annie. "She said she might have sucked Daisy's breath, and asked me how I would have felt to find her dead in the morning."

"You would have felt very sadly, no doubt," said Miss Louisa, smiling; "but, if Daisy never dies till a cat sucks her breath, she will have a long life, I can promise you."

"Then you don't think there is any thing in it, aunt?"

"Nothing but a foolish superstition. What should a cat want of any one's breath?"

"A man once told me of a favourite cat," remarked Mr. Winston, "which he had killed, because he fancied it sucked his breath. It had been accustomed to sleep in his room; and one night he had a dreadful nightmare, with an intolerable feeling of oppression, as though he could not breathe at all. It was some time before he waked; and when he did he found the cat lying beside him and licking his neck. She had licked it with her rough tongue till she had almost drawn blood. 'I could not bear to have her killed,' he said, in conclusion; 'but I felt as if I must after that.'"

"What a fool!" exclaimed Sidney.

"Gently, my boy! The man was not a fool, by any means; but he was under the dominion of a superstition which he had probably learned in the nursery, and acted accordingly. Fear and ignorance have been the parents of cruelty in all ages. The more people study the habits and instincts of animals, the more likely will they be to treat them kindly; and the more kindly they are treated the more reasonable will they become."

"I suppose you would not go so far as to

have hospitals provided for them like the one that Bayard Taylor saw in Aleppo," said Miss Winston.

"What was that?" asked her father. "I do not remember the story."

"An old Mohammedan, who I suppose was very fond of cats, left at his death a large sum of money for the purpose of establishing an hospital for these animals, which is still sustained. 'Here,' says the traveller, 'sick cats are tended, homeless cats find shelter, and aged cats gratefully pur away their declining years.' He saw hundreds of these animals promenading the walls and galleries of the old mosque used for the purpose, all apparently well fed, happy and contented, and the sick and wounded carefully cared for."

"They must have fine music upon moonlight nights," remarked Sidney. "After all, aunt, he might have left his money for many worse purposes."

"And some better ones," said Miss Winston.

CHAPTER III.

THE SMALLER SPOTTED CATS.

One evening, a day or two after the kitten's adventure, as the children were getting ready to hear Aunt Louisa's lecture, the noise of carriage-wheels was heard in front of the house, and presently after a ring at the door-bell.

"There, now!" exclaimed Sidney, impatiently: "some one is coming, and we shall have no lecture, after all! I do wish people would not be visiting always and interrupting one just at the wrong time!"

"Sidney, for shame!" said Daisy. "How would you like it?"

"Like what?"

"Like being talked about in that way when you went anywhere? And perhaps it is somebody you want to see."

"I don't want to see anybody so much as

I want to hear Aunt Louisa's lecture," said Sidney, pretending to pout, and then, with a sudden change of tone, "Hark, Daisy! I do believe it is Uncle Dick!"

"It is not Uncle Dick, I know. It is Mr. Crediton," said Daisy, following Sidney in his headlong progress down-stairs. "His voice sounds exactly like uncle's sometimes."

Mr. Crediton it proved to be, sure enough; and Sidney almost forgot his vexation in the pleasure of seeing him,—for Mr. Crediton was his very particular friend. Though a grave, middle-aged clergyman, he took great delight in every thing that interested the boys. He was an enthusiastic botanist, and could play a game at ball or leapfrog, slide, skate or ride with any boy in his parish. He had grown up out of doors; and his tall figure, broad shoulders and muscular limbs, no less than his deep hearty voice, showed the benefit of his training. There was nothing he enjoyed more than getting together a parcel of the school-children, both boys and girls, and taking them for a long walk over the hills and far away, and showing them all the wonders and curiosi-

ties of the country. Sometimes in the course of these rambles he would gather a moss or fungus, or pick up some little insect, and give them a lecture upon it more full of wonders than a fairy-tale. It must be confessed that the boys and girls often came home from their rambles with sun-flushed faces and scratched hands, not to mention torn dresses and dirty aprons; and once or twice more serious misfortunes had happened. Once the whole party, Mr. Crediton included, had been severely stung by yellow-jackets, and came home with their eyes swollen out of their heads and their faces plastered with mud,—the very best remedy, let it be remembered, for all such stings. On another occasion, while fishing, with Mr. Crediton's cane, for a water-lily, Sidney had tumbled head-foremost into the river and been fished out wetter, if possible, than was the kitten Jessie when we first made her acquaintance; and again Kate Crediton, who, it must be confessed, was something of a romp, found herself fast in a black-walnut tree, and was rescued at the expense of a considerable portion of her dress. But the dress was only a ten-cent calico,

and an old one besides; and nobody was, after all, much the worse for the stings. The children brought home so many new ideas and so much health and enjoyment from their excursions that wise parents thought them cheaply purchased by a few scratches and tatters, and believed themselves extremely favoured in having a minister who possessed so much influence over young people and could interest them to such a degree. Mr. Crediton was rather celebrated as a preacher: he preached very much as he talked; and at some of his illustrations drawn from Natural Science, which struck older people forcibly for their beauty and originality, you might see the children glance at each other with half a smile, as much as to say, "We have heard that before."

Kate Crediton, his only daughter, was Annie's great friend, though they were as different as children could well be. Kate was, as has before been hinted, something of a tom-boy, and sometimes quite shocked Annie's strict notions of propriety; but she was an excellent scholar,—better than Annie herself. She was, for her age, quite a wonderful little housekeeper; and—best of all—

she possessed the very loveliest, sunniest temper in the world. She could play ball with Dick and marbles with Sidney, and beat them both or be beaten herself, with the most perfect good humour. She could jump the rope, roll hoops, ride on horseback, slide, and even skate a little; and she was never angry if any one excelled her in any of these accomplishments. She could sew and knit nicely,—though, to tell the truth, she was not very fond of either, and would rather be out in the fields and digging in the garden than doing the prettiest piece of embroidery that ever was seen. I doubt, indeed, whether she would ever have taken a needle in her hand but from a sense of duty. Annie was very fond of needlework of all sorts, and not very fond of active exercise, to which she had had such an aversion that her health had really suffered very much for the want of it before she came to The Meadows; and even now she would, if permitted, sit over her work or her books from morning till night, or till she had such a headache and pain in her side as to disqualify her to do any thing more for two or three days. Annie liked

to do things as she was used to doing them; Kate was forever inventing new ways, even when the old ones answered as well, or better. Annie cared a great deal too much about "what people would say," and Kate rather too little. But, upon the whole, they went on nicely together, and were very much happier and better for their earnest friendship.

Mr. Crediton had come this evening to propose one of the excursions mentioned above, to take place next week; and the children were, of course, delighted with the idea.

"We'll take our pencils and paper," said Kate, "and try taking some sketches once more. I hope we shall succeed better than we did the last time," she added, laughing.

"Now, Kate, I think we did very well," said Richard. "Grandfather knew what mine was meant for the moment he saw it. Didn't you, grandfather?"

"Why, yes," replied Mr. Winston: "I thought it quite a good picture of a beech-tree. You gave the spread of the branches very well,—though your foliage was rather too heavy. I did not see Annie's."

"I tore it up and threw it away," said Annie. "I did not think it was worth showing."

"Worth showing or not, you should have kept it, Annie," said Mr. Crediton. "Always keep all your drawings. You will find them very useful in showing you what improvement you have made. We do not expect the works of such young artists to be worth much in themselves."

Annie looked annoyed. She had thought very well of her drawing in the first place, and had torn it up in a pet because Kate and Richard had made some criticisms upon it.

"And then Aunt Louisa can give us her lecture upon wild animals in the woods," said Sidney,—"which will make it much more interesting, because we can think, in the intervals of her descriptions, that they are prowling about and waiting to devour us."

Daisy looked as though she thought this would be rather too interesting to be agreeable. "I think it would be much pleasanter to have them at home," she said, half pouting.

"Why, Daisy, I was only joking. You know there are hardly any wild animals left in the country now, and none that are at all dangerous. You don't think Mr. Crediton would take us if there were any real danger? But I think it is fun to fancy such things, as we do when we play at lions and tigers, you know."

"I don't like to play them," said Daisy.

"I rather think, Sidney, if you want a lecture in the woods, Mr. Crediton will have to give it," observed Miss Louisa. "I feel hardly equal to your adventurous walks."

"But what of the lectures?" asked Kate. "I have not heard any thing about them. Who is giving them?"

"Aunt Louisa," replied Annie. "She has given us two already; and we are to have another to-night. Last night it was about domestic cats and lynxes; and to-night we are to have some other kinds of the cat-family."

"And only think, Kate!" interrupted Daisy, eagerly: "lions and tigers are all cats,—just like common cats, only bigger!"

"Of course Kate knows that," said Sidney, rather arrogantly, forgetting that he

had not known it himself a few days before. "But I do wish you could stay and hear Aunt Louisa talk about cats. Mr. Crediton, can Kate stay to night and hear the lecture?"

"Kate may stay if she wishes to, and if she will come home in the morning," replied Mr. Crediton, kindly; "and I hope she will be much the wiser for the lecture. I shall be obliged to deprive myself of the pleasure of hearing it, as I must go down to the sawmill before I go home, to see Jack Short, who is very ill of a fever. I fear it will be a long time before he is well,—if indeed he ever is."

"How long has he been sick?" asked Miss Louisa.

"He was taken about a week ago quite suddenly. I understood he had been playing in the water with the dogs till he was very wet; and that night he was attacked with rheumatic fever, from which he has been suffering ever since."

Richard and Sidney looked at each other but said nothing. Annie was not so forbearing. "It serves him right!" she ex-

claimed. "It is a judgment upon him for treating that poor little kitten so cruelly!"

"I don't think you ought to say so, Annie," said Richard. "You would not like to have any one say that the fever you had last summer was a judgment upon you, would you? It never seems right to me to speak in that way."

"I agree with you, Richard," said Mr. Crediton. "We are apt to be altogether too ready to pronounce upon the calamities which befall our neighbours. Jack is doubtless far from being a good boy; but he is no worse than many others, and he has some very good traits of character; but his parents are ignorant people, and have neglected to give him even the little instruction in their power. I do not consider Jack hopeless by any means. But I must be off, if I am to be at home to-night." And, bidding a kindly good-night to all, he was soon heard driving away.

The children were settled and ready to listen. Annie was working a collar: she always liked to have her hands employed, and insisted that she could listen better when this was the case. Daisy was occu-

pied with a piece of knitting, which tired her fat fingers and tried her patience sadly; but her industry was stimulated by the hope of being able to present her grandfather with a pair of socks of her own knitting at Christmas. Kate had brought no work, not expecting to stay when she left home; but Miss Louisa supplied her with a skein or two of cotton, which she wound off Sidney's hands.

"The animals which seem to come next in order," the lecturer began, "are the smaller spotted cats, such as the margay, the ocelot, the chati, and several other varieties. Almost all these creatures are extremely beautiful, and very strong and courageous in proportion to their size. The greater number inhabit South America. Among these is the ocelot—an elegant little animal about three feet in length including the tail, which is very long in proportion to the body. It is of a reddish-yellow colour, with long, black, chain-like markings upon its sides, while its face, breast and the under parts of its body are pure white. Its shape is graceful and all its motions active and easy. It inhabits the deep un-

trodden forests of South America, where it carefully conceals itself during the day, sallying forth at night to prey upon birds, small quadrupeds and monkeys, which last it is said to entrap by an ingenious artifice. When it has a mind to dine off a monkey, it seeks a convenient limb, where, closing its eyes and stretching out its legs, it pretends to be dead. The monkeys, perceiving it, and unable to repress their curiosity, or perhaps moved by an ungenerous desire to triumph over a fallen enemy, approach in numbers; and, while they are prying and chattering about the supposed dead body, it suddenly starts to life, and some of the party are sure to pay dearly for their amusement.

"The ocelot has several times been tamed, both in this country and in England. I have read a very interesting description of one which was for a long time in the possession of Dr. Traill, of Edinburgh, and which became very tame and docile. She was very playful, loved to be tended and carried about like a cat, and was much attached to those who fed and played with her. Though very powerful, she never

used her strength mischievously, except that she now and then stole and destroyed a glove or hat, and once or twice, when she escaped from confinement, she was guilty of making a great destruction among the hens. On one of these occasions she made advances of friendship towards a horse, by jumping upon his back and there composing herself for a nap; but the horse, not relishing the liberty, began to make various uneasy motions, which caused his new friend to use her claws for the purpose of rendering her seat more secure. The poor horse

> 'What thing upon his back had got
> Did wonder more and more,'

and, greatly alarmed, began to plunge violently. Puss was speedily dislodged, and received a kick, which had the effect of so entirely disgusting her with the society of horses that she always hid herself when one appeared. 'A few days before her departure from Liverpool to London, she occasioned a serious alarm. Being fastened by a long chain in front of a cottage, she suddenly threw down a young girl of four

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years old, and, to the horror of all the bystanders, the ocelot appeared to seize the child by the neck. This was, however, intended merely as play; for neither her sharp teeth nor crooked talons inflicted the slightest injury; and, after tumbling over one another more than once, the child was taken up severely frightened, but noway hurt.' Another adventure with an ocelot turned out much more tragically. A French gentleman had one in his possession for more than three years, which had always appeared perfectly gentle, and was so tame that it had been allowed the range of the house and garden as freely as a domestic cat. One evening, as the ocelot was playing by the fire with a child of three years old who had often frolicked with it before, the animal seemed to become irritated, and, seizing the little girl by the throat, killed it before any assistance could be given."

Kate shuddered. "What a frightful death!"

"I wonder what they did with the creature," said Sidney.

"I believe it was sent to the great menagerie at Paris,—the Jardin des Plantes,"

replied Miss Louisa. "I think I could never feel safe with any such creature at liberty in the house. However gentle they may appear, there is no telling when the wild fierce nature may assert itself.

"The chati, another South American tiger-cat, is even more gentle than the ocelot, and has been many times domesticated. It is about a third larger than the domestic cat, of a pale yellow, and marked with dark stripes and patches. The expression of its face is very mild and pleasing. Don Felix D'Azara, a Spanish gentleman who resided a long time in Brazil, and who has left a very interesting account of his travels and observations, saw a number of these animals, and gives a very full account of them. He states that, though the species is very common, it is seldom met with, owing to its very shy habits; and he doubts whether any animal conceals itself more effectually. He describes it as 'remaining by day in the most impenetrable places, and as coming forth after nightfall, especially upon dark stormy nights, when the chibiguazuas,' as they are called, daringly enter the corrals and court-yards,—though no instance is

known of their detection by the dogs. When the moon shines, they abstain from entering inhabited spots, and are never trapped. To lie in wait for them with a gun is hopeless, so sharp a watch do they keep. They carry off fowls from trees which they climb, often six in one night, and sometimes leave several dead. Men and dogs are avoided by them with extreme caution; and each pair is supposed to live in a separate district, for one male and one female, and no more, are always caught in one place. D'Azara's friend, Father Noseda, formed a trap of strong stakes with three divisions,—in the middle one of which he placed a white fowl, so that it might not only be heard but seen at a distance. The other divisions were so arranged as to be shut by the falling of planks as soon as the chatis entered. These traps were set in those places to which they resorted for prey; and those caught were turned into a great den in Father Noseda's court-yard. Some of them got away and were taken two or three times in the same trap,—from which D'Azara infers that the idea of danger was

obliterated from their recollection by their desire to possess the fowls."

"Perhaps they thought that because they had been successful in getting away once they were too cunning to be caught again," observed Kate.

"Perhaps so; but, as they all were caught at last, they would have been wiser had they been contented with their first escape."

"Is there any more about them?" asked Sidney. "How did they act when they were all put into the den together? I should think they would have quarrelled."

"On the contrary, they were all very peaceable and good-humoured," replied his aunt. "Nearly the whole day was spent by them coiled up in a ball, asleep; and when a chati wished to stretch himself he first licked the one at his side. When straw was put into their den or so placed that they could reach it by thrusting their paws through the bars, it was always found on the day following that they had placed it in a heap, after having divided it into bits about a quarter of an inch long; and on this they reposed. Twilight and night were passed by them in pacing to and fro across their den; and, if

crossed or interrupted by another, they puffed and gesticulated like an angry cat, but never used their paws. They never quarrelled with each other unless they were very much irritated, and then they struck at each other with their fore-paws. They devoured five pounds of flesh a day when first caught; but afterwards three sufficed. A portion was prepared for each of the twelve or fourteen creatures confined, and they took it with their paws, according to the length of time they had been confined, without any interference on the part of the others. If, however, the animal whose turn it was did not take his portion, or disregarded it, another immediately snatched it, without any resistance on the part of the rightful owner, except by sneezing, and sometimes by blows with the fore-paws. A walk was made for them, enclosed by a sort of hurdle, so that rats, ducks, fowls and young dogs could be introduced into it; and upon opening their cage it was usually noticed that only one went out for each victim, and almost always according to the order of their confinement. No cruelty was manifested; and sometimes they would allow

their prey to remain unmolested for several days. D'Azara and his friend frequently closed the doors of the yard, and opened the den, that the animals might leave it. Those lately caught went first; and sometimes the old ones would not go out, even when the den was entered that it might be swept. They were left at liberty for several hours, during which they examined every crevice and then lay down to sleep. When boys teased them with sticks, they retreated to their dens without turning on their persecutors, even when severely beaten. A male on one occasion, becoming very lazy, was abused and bitten by his female mate, as if to punish him. In the night their eyes shone like those of the domestic cat; and they resembled that animal in lying down, in licking and cleansing themselves, washing their faces with their paws, puffing, sneezing, and in many other ways. D'Azara states that his friend caught a young one, and it became so thoroughly tame that it slept in the skirt of his clerical robe and went about loose. He represented that no animal could be more tractable; but it de-

stroyed the poultry of his neighbours, and they killed it."

"How sorry he must have been!" said Annie. "It would have been better to keep it chained up. It seems as though they need not have killed it."

"I rather think if they had been your chickens you would have felt differently," observed Richard. "It does not seem to me that any one has a right to keep pets which interfere with the comfort or property of neighbours."

"I think not, decidedly," said Miss Winston.

"Did you ever see any of these tiger-cats, aunt?" asked Daisy.

"I once saw an animal in a menagerie," replied Miss Winston, "which I think must have been a margay, as I remember it,—though I had not at that time paid much attention to such things. It was very little larger than a well-grown domestic cat, with a very long tail. Its skin was of a pale-buff or fawn colour, with black bands, and the under parts were white. It inhabited the same cage with a fine large hawk, with which it seemed to live on the most intimate and

friendly relations, and looked, as it lay washing its face on some straw, like a very large, good-natured, rather lazy, tortoise-shell cat. Its claws were very strong, and its paws more muscular than those of ordinary cats. The keeper said that it was very good-tempered. I do not know of any other tiger-cats inhabiting America, except the pampas cat, which still more strongly resembles the domestic cat."

"But what do all these wild creatures live upon?" asked Richard. "It does not seem as though there could be animals enough to furnish food for all of them."

"Oh, my dear, you do not reflect upon the great amount of animal life inhabiting those great forests and plains. Think of the countless numbers of monkeys alone. Humboldt saw hundreds at a time going in long procession from tree to tree, besides great herds of peccaries, (which are animals of the pig-kind,) capybaras, guinea-pigs, and the different species of hares, not to mention birds and reptiles. When you reflect upon the solitary habits both of the chati and ocelot,—only one pair inhabiting a large district, in which are hundreds of monkeys

alone,—you can easily see that, with their cunning and dexterity in climbing trees, they are not likely to want for food."

"How I should like to see tropical forests!" said Kate Crediton, musingly. "I think if I were a man I would like to be a professor of botany or natural history, and go off on an exploring-expedition, like Dr. Darwin in the Beagle, to discover new animals and plants. I think it would be the most delightful life in the world."

"It would have its drawbacks, probably, like all other modes of life," said Miss Louisa; "but I agree with you, Kate, that it must be very pleasant. There is something exceedingly fascinating, not merely in making new discoveries, but also in verifying yourself the discoveries that others have made before you. You know that by experience, Kate, in the little that you have studied of botany. There is a great pleasure —is there not?—in counting the stamens and pistils in a flower and comparing them with the descriptions in your book and thus finding out the name. Nobody knows how much they lose by not informing themselves on the very common things that are round

about them. But I share in your desire to see tropical vegetation especially. I should like to go through one of those Brazilian forests, where the most beautiful air-plants grow and blossom upon the stems of the trees, and where the great Lianas or creeping vines, as large round as your arm, throw themselves from tree to tree in long festoons, affording means of passage to the troops of monkeys. Here you may see, in the shady damp places, great tree-ferns, sometimes forty feet high, some of them having their trunks covered with down, others with scales, others again with a white metallic-looking powder, all graceful and peculiar in their shape as the small ferns which you admire so much in our own woods. The air is perfumed with the smell of vanilla and other fragrant plants; and in every place are hundreds of the most beautiful and singular insects, which fill the air with their various notes. But there are plenty of other sounds besides the hum of insects. The assemblies of howling monkeys chaunt their doleful choruses on the tree-tops, especially before rain, and the parrots add their shrill voices. Troops of peccaries

pass, grunting and squeaking, through the underbrush, and now and then is heard the hoarse voice of the great American jaguar, —the tiger of this continent; and, if it be on the banks of a great river, the alligators add their hollow roaring voices to the concert. Night, instead of being the season of quiet, is the time of the greatest uproar; and he is a good sleeper who can gain any repose within hearing of it."

"What a horrible place!" said Daisy. "It is enough to frighten one just to hear of it. I am sure I don't want to be a professor, if one would have to go poking into tigers' dens and such places."

"I don't suppose any one *has* to go if they don't want to," said Annie. "I don't believe Professor D. ever went looking for adventures in that way, though he does lecture upon Natural History."

"No; but they might go if they wanted to, and if they could get anybody like the Government to send them," remarked Sidney. "Sometimes people go who are not professors,—just for fun. And, aunt, if ever you feel as if you would like to go wandering about the world, you need not

blame a boy like me for wanting to be a sailor."

"I don't blame you at all, my dear, for wanting to go. I sympathize with you entirely. But you know the question is not always so much what we *want* to do as what we *ought* to do. I have no doubt at all that, if it is best for you to go, the way will be opened; and, in the mean time, the more you learn, especially of Natural Science, the more you will be able to enjoy your travels yourself and make them useful and interesting to others."

Any talk about Sidney's going to sea was always the signal for Annie to put on her dark face, as the children called it. She never could bear to hear it talked of, and had once made Sidney very angry by telling him that she knew he had not much love for them or he would not be so anxious to run away from all his friends. She now hastened to bring the conversation back to its former channel.

"We have wandered a long way from our cats," said she, in a tone which she meant should sound just as usual, but which was a little constrained in spite of her.

"Are there any other tiger-cats, aunt, besides those in South America?"

"Yes, several. There is a small variety, inhabiting Java and Sumatra, which are as beautiful as the ocelot and margay, and considerably smaller. They are said by the natives to possess great sagacity, and to have the power of imitating the voices of fowls and other birds in order that they may approach them unobserved. They are especially wild and fierce, and can never be tamed, either by hunger, darkness, or kind treatment. Mr. Temminck, a celebrated traveller and naturalist, kept two of them for two years; but, though he tried every means to gain their confidence, they always remained crouched in the darkest corner of their den, and never came out unless pressed by hunger.

"There are also the servals, of which there are several varieties, one of which is of a deep-brown colour. They are all about the same size,—that of a small leopard,—and seem to be rather gentle and amiable in their temper. One which Mr. Frederick Cuvier describes was very gentle and affectionate, 'and sported entirely after the manner of a common cat, attempting often to

catch its tail, and playing with whatever it could roll about with its foot.' They inhabit both Africa and Asia; and their skins are often brought to this country. And now, I think, we must let our cats rest for to-night, as we have sat up much later than usual."

Annie and Kate were to sleep in the large bed in the nursery, and Daisy in a little bed which stood across the room and close by a window. For a wonder, she seemed unwilling to go to bed, and lingered fidgeting about till Annie began to be out of patience with her.

"Do get into bed, Daisy, and let me put the light out. The room will be full of bugs and all sorts of things."

Daisy obeyed without making any answer; and presently the girls heard her crying softly. Annie jumped up and went to her.

"What is it, Daisy? What makes you cry? Are you sick?"

Daisy shook her head, but kept fast hold of Annie's hand. "What is it, then? Do you want any thing? or are you afraid?"

Daisy sobbed that she couldn't help it.

"Do you mind having her sleep in the

bed with us, Kate?" asked Annie, after a little perplexity. "The bed is wide, and she will be satisfied then. She gets frightened so easily. I almost wish aunt had not begun to tell us these stories; for they run in her mind all the time."

Kate made room with great readiness. She had scarcely known the sensation of fear herself, but she saw that Daisy was very uncomfortable, and that was enough to win her sympathy. "What makes you so timid, Daisy?" she asked, after the little girl was settled between them. "You know there isn't any thing here to hurt you, don't you?"

"Yes," sighed Daisy; "but it seems just as if there was; and very often, when I am in the dark, or going through the hall alone, it seems as if some one was just ready to catch me, and my heart beats so I don't know what to do. I know it is foolish, and I try to help it; but I can't."

"Well, never mind," said Annie. "You know the doctor and Aunt Louisa both say you will get over it when you are older. Now we will all say the evening hymn together and not think any more about it."

Before the hymn was finished, Daisy was fast asleep.

"It is a pity she is such a coward," said Kate, in a whisper. "I wonder if she could not be cured of it?"

"Dr. Moore thinks she will outgrow it," replied Annie. "We never notice it if we can help it; and she tries very hard not to show it: so we know it is not affectation."

"How did it begin?" asked Kate. "Did any one tell her frightful stories?"

"Oh, no! She was always just so. She used to cry when it came dark, before she was old enough to speak; but she has been a great deal better the last year. Aunt thinks she was much injured by the way she was managed at Aunt Meredith's. She and Sidney went there to spend the summer; and Aunt Meredith made her go to bed alone in the dark, and did not mind her crying, except to scold and laugh at her. So she left off complaining; but she looked so unwell that Sidney finally wrote to Aunt Louisa, and aunt went and brought her home. She had fits after she came; and Dr. Moore said a little more of such treatment would have injured her very much."

"I wonder that any person that knew what fear is would treat a child so," replied Kate. "I am not much of a coward myself; but I know it is any thing but a pleasant feeling."

"The worst of it was, that Aunt Meredith is a real coward herself," said Annie, "and is afraid of the most foolish things, such as Daisy would not think of crying for. She made the greatest fuss last summer you ever heard of, because there was a little striped snake in the garden. She would not go out for two or three days. And she screams at toads and mice, that never hurt anybody. Daisy is very bold about real danger. The day the horses ran away, she never moved nor cried, but sat as still as a mouse till they were stopped. It is always something she don't know about, or something she has heard or read, that troùbles her. I dare say she was thinking of that story of the ocelot killing the little French girl, till she felt as though there was one under the bed, just ready to catch her by the throat."

"Poor thing!" said Kate, sleepily. "I hope—she will—get over it!" And the three were all asleep!

CHAPTER IV.

THE LEOPARDS.

The next morning, soon after breakfast, Kate returned to the village, whither Annie accompanied her, intending to spend the day and return when the family came from the weekly lecture at the church, which they always attended on Wednesday evening. Dick and Sidney also disappeared, without telling any one, except Aunt Louisa, where they were going: so that Daisy had the house to herself. This, however, did not trouble her at all, for she was very easily amused, and was so quiet and obedient that she was a welcome companion to everybody,—whether she sat on a stool by her grandfather's feet, looking at pictures or reading, or went about the house with Aunt Louisa to attend to the housekeeping, or climbed up in one of the high kitchen-

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chairs to watch the cook making cake and pastry. Daisy was "such a good girl," as every one in the house said. She was never in the way. So she passed her morning very pleasantly,—first in learning very exactly the arithmetic and geography lessons (very little lessons, to-be-sure, they were) which she recited to Aunt Louisa every day, and then in washing out her doll's clothes in a nice little tub which the cook used to lend her for the purpose. In the course of her laundry-work, Daisy gained quite a victory over herself; for, chancing to want one of Miss Dolly's frocks which she had left up-stairs in the nursery-closet, she actually went up alone and got it, though the upper hall was quite dark and there was nobody in that part of the house. But, though she felt pleased with herself, she told nobody; for she was very much ashamed of her fears, and did not like to have any one know that she was afraid. So, on the whole, she enjoyed her solitary morning very much.

Richard and Sidney had been up betimes, and had learned their holiday-lessons before breakfast; and as soon as that meal was

over, and Aunt Louisa had prepared a certain basket, they slipped off very quietly, without even bidding Kate good-morning,—an omission for which they were duly called to account in the evening by Annie, who declared that she never saw any thing like it,—though she must have seen a number of things very similar. The fact was, that Richard and Sidney were going to the saw-mill to see Jack Short; and, as they had not the least idea what sort of reception they were likely to meet with, they thought it best to say nothing of their intention till afterwards. The boys had talked the matter over the night before, and agreed that the best way of doing Jack good, or, at least, showing him that they bore no malice, was to go at once and see him, without waiting till the family sent up to The Meadows, as they were pretty sure to do in the end. At first Sidney did not like the idea of going. He was still very angry at Jack whenever he thought of the kitten or saw the red scar on Richard's fair forehead; though this feeling gave way a little when he remembered the poor boy's sufferings. He thought it would be better to wait and let Jack say

he was sorry, or make some other acknowledgment, before visiting him. Richard was of a different opinion.

"We are in the right," said he; "and, for that very reason, we can afford to speak first. I believe when one person has injured another it is a good deal easier for the injured one to forgive than for the injurer."

"How like a book you talk, Dick!" said Sidney, half in laugh and half in admiration. "I believe you are right, though. But won't it look as if we wanted to triumph over him if we go to see him without any errand? I would not like to hurt his feelings, though he is such a fellow."

"We'll manage all that nicely," replied Dick. "We'll get aunt to fix up something nice for him,—as she is always doing, you know,—and carry it down there ourselves. Then it will be the most natural thing in the world to ask for Jack; and he need not see us if he does not want to. Perhaps he will be glad to see us. Then, if he chooses to make any apology, he can; and, if not, he can let it alone. I don't care whether he does or not."

"Nor I," said Sidney. "After all, as

Mr. Crediton says, he has never had much chance. He is smart enough, too: I never saw any boy that had more ingenuity in making things. You know that model of a saw-mill that he built last summer. Grandfather said it was a real curiosity. If he would only behave himself and go to school, he might be a great mechanic."

"Perhaps we may be able to do something about that too," replied Richard. "I don't believe he will be about again very soon; and perhaps he may get a taste for reading while he is laid up. At any rate, we shall show our good will by going to see him."

Accordingly, they set out the next morning, carrying a basket containing certain matters which Aunt Louisa's experience pronounced might be good for the poor boy. Walking leisurely along, they arrived in due time at Mr. Short's dwelling, which was built near the mill, upon the sloping side of a hill commanding a fine prospect, which the inmates appreciated about as much as their own pigs might have done. It was a brown frame house, in pretty good condition so far as repairs went, but with a want of neatness and comeliness about it which was really

painful. A yard had been fenced in about the door and planted with shrubs; but many of the boards were gone from the fence. The sow wandered in and out at her own will; and nothing seemed to have survived but a hardy cinnamon rose, and a lilac, which at present served as clothes-horses to sustain various wet garments of doubtful aspect, and some stockings so ragged that it was a wonder how the owners ever found the right way into them. A vegetable-patch near at hand fared rather better; but even this was weedy and ill arranged, and not nearly so productive as it might have been under better management.

Mr. Short did not own the place: if he had, perhaps he would have taken better care of it. He "tended" the saw-mill for Mr. Winston, to whom it belonged, and who had made many efforts to improve the condition of his tenants or induce them to improve it for themselves. Short was a good workman under active superintendence: he was perfectly honest and generally sober, and, in a rough way, fond of his children; but it seemed as though all his energies were expended upon his landlord's

business, for he had little left for his own. He had one great misfortune,—an ill-tempered, gossiping and untidy wife. Mrs. Short had, as some of her neighbours said, no "faculty." She had never learned a great deal of housekeeping in her youth; and what little she had learned she seemed to have forgotten. It is said of some people that they never do any thing by halves. Mrs. Short, on the contrary, never half did any thing. The clothes she made for her children came to pieces directly, and were never whole or clean. "She could not get time," she said, "to fix up her children as some people did." She could not get time to comb their hair, or wash them clean, or get them ready for church, for Sunday or day schools,—to see that they did not tell lies, or swear, or take what did not belong to them. Jack, who was growing a great boy, she was glad to keep out of the house on any terms; and Sarah Anne (a really well-disposed child, who would gladly have gone to school regularly) was kept at home as much as three days in the week, while her mother "just ran in to the neighbours'" or "went to the village on an errand;" for, with

all her complaints of want of time, she never lacked time to go out visiting. Her husband declared that she spent more hours in her neighbours' houses than she did in her own; and some of the neighbours thought so too. Meantime her dinner spoiled over the fire and her bread burned in the oven. Nothing was comfortable in the place, inside or out. Was it any wonder that her husband had an occasional drunken spree, or that Jack never stayed at home when he could stay anywhere else, or that Sarah Anne (who was the best of the set) was growing up almost as shiftless, though not quite so ignorant, as her mother?

Sidney and Richard made their way round to the back-door, and knocked several times without success. At last, as they were debating what to do, Sarah Anne opened it. She had the baby in her arms, and looked slatternly and weary enough.

"Mother has stepped out for a minute," said she; "and father is down at the mill, if you want to see him."

"We came to see Jack," said Sidney, rather bashfully,—for he had a boyish dread of strange girls of all sorts. "We heard he

was sick; and Aunt Louisa has sent him some things to eat."

"Oh!" replied the girl, looking a good deal surprised, but rather gratified. "Come in, then. I dare say he will like to see you." She led the way through a little labyrinth, composed of washing-tub and pounding-barrel, both full of dirty suds, a churn, and a table still covered with the remains of breakfast, and, opening an inner door, she introduced them:—"Here's somebody come to see you, Jack."

Jack turned his eyes in the direction of the door. His flushed face flushed still more when he saw who it was, and it seemed as though he would have liked to turn away; but the cruel disease had fixed his head as in a vice, and the least movement caused him intense pain.

"I am very sorry to find you so sick," said Richard, kindly, taking a seat by the bedside. "We did not know it till yesterday; and we thought we would come up and see if you wanted any thing. Aunt has sent you some jelly and things."

"Thank you," said Jack,—rather shortly. He was not much used to saying these

words, which was perhaps the reason that they seemed to come with difficulty.

"Can we do any thing for you?" said Richard, whose anger had all vanished at the sight of Jack's suffering. "Don't you want some ice-water? We have brought a piece of ice; and aunt says you can have more if you like."

Jack's eyes sparkled, and he put his feverish lips together. "I have wanted some cold water so much!" he said. "Nothing else tastes natural to me; and it gets warm so soon standing in the house."

The girl brought some water in a pail, to put the ice in. It had been standing since before breakfast, she said; but the baby had worried so she could not go to the spring for more. Sidney took the pail and went after it himself. He was glad to get out of the house, and out of the sight of Jack's face, which made him feel as if he wanted to cry. Jack long remembered the sound of the ice tinkling against the side of the tumbler as the pleasantest music he had ever heard. "Oh, how good that is!" he said, after he had managed with some difficulty to raise himself enough to drink.

"Thank you, boys!" This "thank you" seemed to come easier than the last.

"If you have any thing to do," said Richard, turning to the girl, "we will sit here with Jack till your mother comes." She gladly accepted the offer; and, the baby being by this time asleep, she was soon heard making a great clattering among the dishes outside. Richard and Sidney smoothed the bed as well as they knew how, shook up the pillow, and opened a window to admit the fresh air, which was much needed, and then sat down, feeling rather awkward now that there was no more to be done.

Jack first broke the silence. "What has become of that cat?" he asked. "That kitten, you know?"

"She is at our house," replied Sidney, "and we are going to keep her. She is a pretty little thing, as full of fun as she can be."

"I have been sorry about that ever since," said Jack, without looking up. "I didn't mean to hit you, Dick. Now, really I didn't!"

"You need not mind about that," replied Richard. "It is well now; and, to speak plainly, Jack, I don't think that was half so

bad as treating the poor kitten so. I wonder how you or any of us would feel to be put helpless into a boat and then hunted with bloodhounds. How did you like it when Mr. Stoke's bull chased you through the pasture? You didn't find it very good fun, did you?"

"You don't suppose they feel as we do,—cats and dogs, and such creatures?"

"I suppose they feel very nearly as badly. Why not? Just think how the poor little thing tried to get away, and how pitifully she mewed. And think how a deer will run, or any hunted animal, to save his life."

"Well, I know," said Jack. "I've thought about that too, since I have lain here on my back. I never was sick before; and it seems as if last week was the longest I ever knew. Sometimes I think I shall never get well," said he, lowering his voice: "I know I am very sick, and I don't seem to get any better. Do you know what the doctor thinks? I know he told Mr. Crediton something about me yesterday; but I didn't dare to ask him. Did he tell you?" Richard and Sidney looked at each other.

"I don't know exactly what he thinks,

Jack," said Richard, rather embarrassed: "only he says you are very sick. But, at any rate, it won't do you any harm to think about dying. You know we must all die some time; and I suppose it doesn't make much difference when, if we are only ready."

"But it's very hard to die and go you don't know where! Oh, if I can only get well, I will try to be a better boy."

Richard was very much moved. "You want a better heart to be a better boy, Jack," replied Richard: "you must ask God to give you this. Mr. Crediton can teach you better than I can, and he will be glad to teach you, I know; but you don't want any teaching to say, 'God be merciful to me, a sinner,' and that prayer from the heart will be heard."

"Do you suppose your aunt would come and see me?" asked Jack, with some hesitation. "I know she thinks I am a very bad boy; but it seems to me as if it would do me good to have her talk to me. I am so ignorant! I wish I had gone to Sunday-school when I was well, and then I should not have it all to learn now. Do you think she would?"

"I am sure she would, in a minute," said Sidney, "and be very glad to come. We

will tell her as soon as we get home; and perhaps she will come this afternoon."

Jack seemed very thankful; and the boys now took their leave, promising to come again soon. As they were going down the hill in front of the house, they met Mrs. Short, in a dirty, torn calico dress, coming up.

"Do tell, boys, if you've been to our house!" she said. "If I'd known I was going to have company, I'd have picked up a little; but Jack's being sick puts me about so I don't seem to have time for nothing."

Sidney only wondered whether any one could be so sick as to keep her in the house.

"Jack is very ill," he observed.

"Yes: he's dreadful bad by spells; and it is a sight of work to take care of him. He's dreadful troublesome when he's sick. I hope he won't be down long, I'm sure."

The boys bade her good-morning, and went on their way,—Sidney for once very silent. "Isn't it queer, Dick," he observed at last, "that Jack should be so frightened at the idea of dying? I always thought he would not be afraid of any thing. I have seen him run across the mill-dam twenty times when the water was so deep in it that

he could hardly keep his feet; and he is always doing the most reckless things."

"That is no sign he should not be afraid of dying," replied Richard. "I can tell you, it is a very different thing doing such a thing as that, with people to look at you, from lying awake and alone, night after night, with nothing to think of but death staring you in the face, and coming a little nearer, and a little nearer, every breath you draw."

"To-be-sure!" said Sidney: "it seems very much harder."

"And yet," continued Richard, musingly, "how many people—especially women—die happy and don't seem to mind it much! that is, they mind it, of course, and think of those they leave behind,—but they don't fear it, and they seem to die as they go to sleep."

"I suppose they are helped," said Sidney, in a low voice. He knew that Richard was thinking of his own mother's death. "I hope if Jack does get well he will be a better boy," he continued, after a pause. "It does seem as if he had some good in him, don't it? And that Sarah Anne looks as if she would be a nice girl if she only had any chance for her life. Did you ever see such a looking house?

Old Waterman's cabin in the woods is a palace to it."

Miss Winston went up to see Jack in the afternoon, and found him no better. He was in great pain, and could not move without groaning and even screaming; and his fever and thirst were excessive. Miss Winston did much more for him than the boys had been able to do. She hung up a curtain, which darkened the room and kept the flies out, took part of the clothes off the bed and arranged the rest so as to be more comfortable, and put clean, cool, linen pillow-cases upon the dirty and tumbled pillows. She washed his face and hands in warm water and dried them without hurting him, and combed his tangled hair,—not a very pleasant task, for poor Jack's habits were far from neat. All this made the poor boy a great deal more comfortable; but it could not do away with the general air of discomfort and untidiness which belonged to the house and every thing in it. She ventured to give Mrs. Short some friendly hints, which were not very graciously received, and were never acted upon by herself at least,—though Sarah Anne treasured them up and endea-

voured to reduce them to practice. Mrs. Short thought her housekeeping "as good as her neighbours,' considering."

Miss Winston had very little talk with Jack. She found him so excited by fever and the fear of death that it seemed as though a very little more would be enough to throw him off his balance entirely. She contented herself with reading to him a little out of the holy Gospels, and in praying with him,—after which she left him, promising to come and see him again soon. Jack felt, somehow, that the very sight of her did him good,—that the sound of her crutch and her lame step was music to his ears. He wished there was any thing in the world he could do for the family to lighten a little his load of gratitude; and, pondering over the matter, he began to dream about it, and finally fell into the first refreshing sleep he had enjoyed since his fever came on.

All the family went to the village to church in the evening: so the lecture was postponed to the next day. Miss Winston and Annie went up to see Jack in the morning, and found him rather better. The house was somewhat improved in appear-

ance, though Annie, who had never been there before, pronounced it the dirtiest place she ever saw; and Sarah Anne had been washing her brother's face and combing his hair, as she had seen it done the day before. Miss Winston commended her nursing, and asked her to come up to The Meadows after dinner and get some things for Jack, promising to send some more ice,—the only thing he seemed to care for.

When they met in the evening, it seemed at first as though the sick boy's case would exclude every other topic of conversation; and it was not till Annie had several times reminded the boys that the evening was slipping away that they composed themselves to listen.

"The leopard, and its near relation the panther," said Miss Louisa, "abound principally in Africa and Asia, where they have always been found in great numbers from the earliest times. In the days of the Roman Empire, when the cruel games of the amphitheatre flourished, multitudes of these beautiful animals were every year sacrificed to the bloodthirsty tastes of the populace, who looked on with delight from their secure seats

while hundreds of wild animals fought and tore each other to pieces in the arena below."

"What cruel wretches!" exclaimed Annie. "Did the women look on too?"

"Yes: men, women and children, thousands at a time; and not only did they delight in the spectacle of wild-beast combats, but they had the greatest pleasure in seeing men who were trained for the purpose fight with the animals and with each other; and the most high-bred women gazed with interest on the dying agonies of their fellow-creatures, and even condemned them to death when called upon to give the signal for mercy. Thousands of the early saints and martyrs of the church were put to death in this way. Among the many wild animals employed on these occasions the leopard and panther figured largely,—two or three hundred—and on one occasion five hundred —being let loose at once."

"I did not know the leopard and panther were at all alike," observed Sidney. "I thought the panther was a native of this country."

"The puma or cougar is commonly called the panther," said Miss Louisa; "and the

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name is frequently corrupted into 'painter.' It is, however, a very different animal, as you will see when we come to examine them both. Between the panther and the leopard there seems to be some confusion. Almost all naturalists, however, are of the opinion that they are distinct species, though it seems rather difficult to distinguish between them. The general colour of the leopard is yellowish, becoming white underneath, and marked with many black spots, which vary in size and arrangement. Those on the head, neck, a part of the shoulders and the limbs, are full, small, and placed close to each other in a confused manner; those on the body are arranged four or five together in a rose-like form, the parts surrounded by these circles of spots being of a deeper colour than the rest of the skin. Ten of these ringed spots, which are said to resemble the print of the animal's foot in the sand, may be counted in a perpendicular line from the top of the back to the under part of the body. The back of the ear is black, with a white spot in the middle; there is another white spot over the eye, and a black one at the opening of the lips. The pan-

ther seems to differ principally in being more strongly made, in having the black spots arranged with more regularity, and in possessing a longer tail. The length of the animal from which this description was taken was five feet four inches from the nose to the tip of the tail, the tail itself being two feet three inches. I have seen some smaller than this, and at least one which was considerably larger. It is said that the animal is sometimes found black, with the spots of a deeper shade; and I have seen an animal which the showman called the black African panther, which was of a glossy black all over. I did not observe any spots. It was very fierce and sullen, and remained for the most part coiled up in one corner of its den. The keeper said it was the most intractable animal he had ever had the charge of, and drew an unfavourable comparison between its manners and those of a large lion next door, which he avowed could do any thing but talk. Cuvier says that these black leopards are sometimes found in the same litter as the yellow ones; and some travellers profess to have seen white ones,—apparently a kind of albinos.

"In a wild state, these animals seem to inhabit thick coverts and deep retired forests, and are much more seldom seen than their lordly cousins the tigers. They are exceedingly active, climbing like cats, and chasing the monkeys to the topmost branches of the trees with the greatest ease. They are very fond of sheep and poultry, and carry off many dogs, for whose flesh they seem to have a great partiality.

"In India they are sometimes hunted with elephants, like the tiger; but the ordinary way of destroying them is by traps set in the places to which they are known to resort for prey. If hunted by dogs, they usually take to a tree, and are then easily shot. They are often taken alive and brought to this country and to England, and seem to care less for confinement than any of the cat-kind. Some of them become so tame as to allow almost any liberties to be taken with them. They differ very much in their dispositions, however, as was shown by a pair which were kept for a long time in the Tower of London. The male, notwithstanding the kindest treatment, always remained sullen and ferocious; while the

female became so tame as to allow the keepers to pat and caress her, and even to take pleasure in being noticed. She had one mischievous propensity, however,—namely, a particular fancy for destroying small articles of dress, such as hats, muffs, umbrellas, and scarfs. These she would snatch with the greatest quickness, and then amuse herself with tearing them into a hundred pieces, all the time as good-natured as possible. Their food—which was principally beef—was usually thrown up in front of their den, at least two feet from the bars, and they always succeeded in catching it before it fell to the ground.

"There is a very interesting account given by Mrs. Bowditch of a panther which she brought to England with her, and which I will read to you, as it is beautifully told and gives a very good idea of the gentleness and capacity for attachment of these creatures.

"'I am induced to give you some account of a panther which was in my possession for some months. He and another were found, when very young, in a forest, apparently deserted by their mother. They were taken to the King of Ashantee, in

whose palace they lived for several weeks, when my hero, being much larger than his companion, suffocated him in a fit of romping, and was then sent to Mr. Hutchinson, the resident left by Mr. Bowditch at Comassee. This gentleman, observing that the animal was docile, took pains to tame him, and in a great measure succeeded. When he was about a year old, Mr. Hutchinson returned to Cape Coast, and had the animal led through the country by a chain, occasionally letting him loose when eating was going on, when he would sit by his master's side and take his share with comparative gentleness. Once or twice he purloined a fowl, but easily gave it up to Mr. Hutchinson on being allowed a portion of something else. On the day of his arrival, he was placed in a small court leading to the private rooms of the governor, and, after dinner, was led by a thin cord into the room, when he received our salutations with some degree of roughness, but with perfect good humour. Upon the least encouragement, he laid his paws upon our shoulders and rubbed his head upon us, and, his claws having been filed, there was no danger of

his tearing our clothes. He was kept in the court for a week or two, and showed no ferocity, except when one of the servants tried to pull his food from him, when he caught the offender by the leg and tore out a small piece of flesh, but never seemed to owe him any ill-will afterwards.' "

"I wonder what the servant owed him?" said Annie.

"He did not owe him any thing. He got his pay, and served him right, too," replied Sidney. "But go on, if you please, aunt."

"'One morning he broke his cord; and, the cry being given and the castle-gates shut, a chase commenced. After leading his pursuers a few times around the ramparts, and knocking down two or three children by bouncing against them, he suffered himself to be caught and led back to his quarters, under one of the guns of the fortress. By degrees the fear of him subsided, and, orders having been given to the sentinels to prevent his escape through the gates, he was left at liberty to go where he pleased, and a boy was appointed to prevent his intrusion into the apartments of the officers. His keeper, however, generally passed his watch

in sleeping; and Sai—as the panther was called, after the royal giver—roamed at large. On one occasion he found his servant sitting on the step of the door, upright, but fast asleep, when he lifted his paw, gave him a blow on the side of the head which laid him flat, and then stood wagging his tail, as though enjoying the mischief he had committed. He became exceedingly attached to the governor, and followed him everywhere, like a dog. His favourite station was at the window of a sitting-room which overlooked the whole town: there, standing on his hind-legs, his fore-paws resting on the window-ledge and his head laid between them, he appeared to interest himself with what was passing beneath. The children also stood with him at the window; and one day, finding his presence an encumbrance, and that they could not get their chairs close, they used their united efforts to pull him down by the tail.' "

"Think of that, Daisy!" said Richard. "How would you like to look out of a window alongside of a leopard?"

"I shouldn't like it at all," said Daisy, decidedly; "and I wouldn't do it. What if

he had bitten off their heads, as the ocelot did the little French girl's? I don't believe aunt would let me play with a panther if he was ever so tame!"

"No, my child: I would prefer you should have some other playfellow, even if the panther were as good-natured as our friend Lai, who seems to have been the most amiable of animals. 'One morning he missed the governor, who was settling a dispute in the hall, and who, being surrounded by black people, was hidden from the view of his favourite. Lai wandered with a dejected look to various parts of the fortress in search of him; and while absent on this errand the audience ceased, the governor returned to his room, and seated himself at a table to write. Presently he heard a heavy step coming up-stairs, and, raising his eyes to the open door, beheld Lai! At that moment he gave himself up for lost, for Lai immediately sprung from the door on his neck. Instead, however, of devouring him, he laid his head close to the governor's, rubbed his cheek upon his shoulder, wagged his tail, and tried to evince his happiness. Occasionally, however, the panther caused

a little alarm to the other inmates of the castle, and the old woman who swept the floors was made ill by her fright. She was one day sweeping the boards of the great hall, with a short broom, and in an attitude approaching to all-fours, when Lai, who was hidden under one of the sofas, suddenly leaped upon her back, where he stood in triumph. She screamed so violently as to summon the other servants; but they, seeing the panther, as they thought, in the act of devouring her, one and all scampered off as quickly as possible; nor was she relieved till the governor, hearing the noise, came to her assistance.

"'Strangers were naturally uncomfortable when they saw so powerful a beast at perfect liberty, and many were the ridiculous scenes which took place, they not liking to own their alarm, yet perfectly unable to retain their composure in his presence.

"'This interesting animal was well fed twice a day, but was never given any thing which had life in it. He stood about two feet high, and was of a dark-yellow colour, thickly spotted with black rosettes and, from his good feeding and the care taken to clean

him, his skin shone like satin. The expression of his countenance was very amiable and good-tempered, and he was particularly gentle to children. He would lie down on the mat by their side when they slept, and even the infant shared his caresses and remained unhurt. During the period of his residence in Cape Town, I was much occupied in making arrangements for my departure from Africa, but generally visited my future companion every day; and we became great friends before we sailed. He was conveyed on board the vessel in a large wooden cage thickly barred with iron, but even this confinement was not deemed a sufficient protection by the canoe-men, who were so alarmed at taking him from the shore to the vessel, that in their confusion they dropped cage and all into the sea. For a moment I gave my poor panther up for lost; but some sailors jumped into a boat belonging to the vessel and dragged him out in safety. The beast himself seemed to be completely subdued by his ducking; and, as no one dared to open his cage to dry it, he rolled himself up in one corner, nor roused himself till after an interval of some

days, when he recognised my voice. When I spoke he raised his head, held it on one side, then on the other, to listen, and when I came fully into view he jumped upon his legs and appeared frantic. He rolled himself over and over; he howled; he opened his enormous jaws, and cried, and seemed as though he would have torn his cage to pieces. However, as his violence subsided, he contented himself with thrusting his nose and paws through the bars to receive my caresses.

"'The greatest treat I could bestow on my favourite was lavender-water. Mr. Hutchinson had told me that on the way from Ashantee he drew a scented handkerchief from his pocket, which was immediately seized by the panther and reduced to atoms; nor could he venture to open a bottle of perfume when the animal was near, he was so eager to enjoy it. I indulged him twice a week by making a cup of stiff paper, pouring a little lavender-water into it and giving it to him through the bars of his cage. He would drag it to him with eagerness, roll himself over it, nor rest till the smell was evaporated. By this means I taught

him to put out his paws without showing his nails, always refusing the lavender-water till he had drawn them back again, and in a short time he never on any occasion protruded his nails when offering his paw.' "

"I wonder if cats in general are fond of perfumes?" said Annie.

"They don't like cologne, I know," observed Daisy, "for I have often tried to make Punch smell of it; but they like catnip and—what was that stuff you took when you were sick, aunt, that grows in the corner of the garden?"

"Valerian," replied Miss Winston. "I do not admire their taste in that particular, I must say."

"Lufra used to like rose-water," said Richard; "but then he liked wine and strong coffee: so he was no rule. But go on about the panther, if you please, aunt."

"'We lay eight weeks in the river Gaboon,' Mrs. Bowditch continues, 'where Sai had plenty of food, but was never suffered to leave his cage. His indignation was constantly excited by the pigs, which were suffered to run past his cage; and the sight of one of the monkeys put him in a perfect fury.

While at anchor in the river, an ourang-outang was brought for sale, and lived three days on board; and I never shall forget the uncontrollable rage of the one or the agony of the other on their first meeting. The ourang-outang was about three feet high, and very powerful in proportion to his size, so that, when he fled with extraordinary rapidity to the farther end of the deck, neither men nor things remained upright when they opposed his progress: there he took refuge in a sail, and, though generally obedient to the voice of his master, force was necessary to make him quit the shelter of its folds. As for the panther, his back was in an arch, his tail was extended and perfectly stiff, his eyes flashed, and as he howled he showed his huge teeth. Then, as if forgetting the bars before him, he tried to spring on the ourang-outang to devour him. It was long before he recovered his tranquillity. Day and night he appeared to be on the watch; and the appearance of a large monkey we had on board renewed his agitation. We at length sailed for England, with an ample supply of provisions; but, unhappily, we were boarded by pirates during the voyage and

nearly reduced to a state of starvation. My panther must have perished but for a collection of more than three hundred parrots with which we sailed from the river, and which died very fast while we were in the northwest trades. Lai's allowance was one a day; but this was so scanty a pittance that he grew ravenous, and had not the patience to pick off the feathers before he commenced his meal. The consequence was that he became very ill and refused even this small allowance of food. Those around me tried to persuade me that he suffered from the colder climate; but his dry nose and paws convinced me that he was feverish, and I had him taken from the cage, when, instead of jumping about and enjoying his liberty, he lay down and rested his head on my feet, I then made three pills, each containing two grains of calomel. The boy who had the charge of him, and who was much attached to him, held his jaws open while I pushed the medicine down his throat. Early the next morning I went to visit my patient, and found his guard sleeping in his cage; and, having administered a further dose to the invalid, I had the satisfaction of seeing

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him perfectly recovered in the evening. On the arrival of the vessel in the London Docks, Lai was taken ashore and presented to the Duchess of York, who placed him in Exeter Change to be taken care of till she herself went to Holland. He remained there for some weeks, and was suffered to roam the greater part of the day without any restraint. On the morning previous to the duchess's departure, she went to visit her new pet, and admired his healthy appearance and gentle demeanour. In the evening, when her royal highness's coachman went to take him away, he was dead in consequence of an inflammation of the lungs.'"

"Oh, what a pity! How sorry she must have been!"

"Yes: no doubt she was much disappointed."

"Are not leopards sometimes used in hunting, like dogs?" asked Sidney. "I think I have seen a picture of an animal called a hunting leopard."

"Yes: the chetah is called the hunting leopard, and is used in this way both in India and Africa. It is in some respects a

very peculiar animal, having certain characteristics which seem to approach those of the dog. Thus, its claws are not retractile, —that is, they cannot be drawn back into a sheath as the kitten's are,—but rest upon the ground like those of the dog and wolf. Nevertheless, it is a true cat, and one of the handsomest and most docile of the group. Its fur is of a beautiful yellowish-fawn colour above, and nearly pure white beneath, and is variegated with numberless black spots, which are not arranged in rose form like those of the leopard and panther, but are scattered promiscuously over the sides and body. It is not so smooth and soft as that of the leopard and tiger, but somewhat crimp in its character, and there is a kind of mane or crest of hard, stiff, upright hairs along the ridge of the back. The tail is about as long as the body, has a white tip, and is surrounded near the extremity with several black rings. The end of the nose is black like a dog's; and there is a curved black line extending from the mouth to the inner angle of the eyes. The chetah stands higher upon its legs than the rest of the family, and somewhat resembles a hound in

its figure. Mr. Bennett, speaking of two that were kept in the Tower menagerie, says, 'They are truly an elegant and graceful pair, having, when let out into the court-yard in their couples, very much of the air and manners of greyhounds. When noticed or fondled, they purr like cats; and this is their usual mode of expressing pleasure. If, on the other hand, they are uneasy, whether from cold, from a craving after food or from a jealous apprehension of being neglected, their note consists of a short, uniform and repeated mew. They are extremely fond of play, and their manner of playing resembles that of the cat. The chetahs speedily become fond of those who are kind to them, and exhibit their fondness in an open, frank, confiding manner. There can, in fact, be little doubt that they might with the greatest facility be reduced to a state of perfect domestication and rendered fully as familiar and faithful as the dog himself.'"

"I should like to have one. Wouldn't you, aunt?" said Sidney.

"It would be a very pretty pet, certainly, if one could overcome a certain distrust of

all such animals," replied Miss Winston; "but for the matter of use in hunting I suspect you would find your pointer Sport the more serviceable animal of the two."

"How are they used in hunting?" asked Annie.

"They are mostly employed upon the great open plains of Bengal and Persia, where there are few enclosures, and which abound with different species of deer and antelope. The chetah, which usually has its eyes covered with a hood, is brought to the field in a flat-topped cart, drawn by oxen; and the sportsman who wishes to enjoy the hunt sits beside the driver, for should he come on horseback it is ten to one the game would become frightened and run off, while the sight of the cart, built like the ordinary ones employed by the natives, occasions them no alarm. When the cart is arrived near enough, the attendant takes the hood from the chetah's eyes, looses his slips, and with his hand points out the game to him. The chetah slips quietly off the cart on the side opposite to the game, and advances in a slow canter, crouching close to the ground and taking advantage of

every bush and tree to conceal itself, till it arrives within the requisite distance, when with two or three great bounds it leaps upon its prey and brings it to the earth. The attendants immediately run up, and, while one diverts the attention of the chetah by offering it some of the blood, the other secures the game. If, however, the animal misses its aim, it returns to its keeper growling sullenly and in great ill-humour, and can seldom be coaxed to undertake the chase again. The chetahs are sometimes led about the streets for sale in Indian cities; and it is said that in the great days of the Indian emperors more than a thousand have been carried out at once in the train of a native prince."

"It must have been a pretty sight," said Sidney.

"They sometimes took the field with a great deal of pomp, with hundreds of elephants, and thousand of followers, armed and unarmed, whose office it was to beat the bushes and drive all the game in a large extent of country into a circle around the prince and his nobility, who killed what they pleased. But there is little of this

'pomp and circumstance' remaining; for most of the descendants of the Indian emperors are either languishing in exile or pensioners on the bounty of the English, who possess their lands and revenues."

"Are there any others of the leopard-kind besides those you have mentioned?" asked Richard.

"There is but one more of importance,—the Rimau Dahan, or Sumatran tiger. This species was first discovered by Sir Stamford Raffles in the forests of Bencoolen, in Sumatra,—where he procured a young one, which was afterwards brought to Europe. It is a large animal, about four feet long from the nose to the root of the tail, which measures about three feet more. Unlike most of the cats, its colour is of an ashy gray, without any tint of red or yellow, and variegated by darker spots and stripes, each of which is surrounded and defined by a margin of deep velvety black. The tail is very long and large, and the limbs stout and robust,—especially the feet and toes. Sir Stamford Raffles thus describes those which were in his possession:—

"'Both specimens, while in a state of

confinement, were remarkable for playfulness and docility: no domestic kitten could be more so. They were always courting intercourse with persons passing by; and the expression of their countenances—which was open and playful—showed the greatest delight when noticed, throwing themselves on their backs and delighting in being tickled and rubbed. On board ship there was a small Musi dog which used to play around the ship and with the animals; and it was amusing to watch the playfulness and tenderness with which the latter came in contact with his inferior-sized companion. When fed with a fowl which had died, he seized the prey, and, after sucking the blood and tearing it a little, he amused himself for hours with throwing it about and jumping after it in the same manner that a cat plays with a mouse before it is quite dead. He never seemed to look upon men or children as prey, but as companions; and the natives assert that when wild they subsist principally upon poultry, birds and the smaller kinds of deer. They are never found in numbers, and may be considered as rather a rare animal even in the southern part of

Sumatra. They are generally found in the vicinity of villages, and are never dreaded by the natives except as they destroy poultry. The natives declare that they sleep, and often lie in wait for their prey, on trees; and from this circumstance they derive their name of Dahan,—which signifies the fork of a tree, across which they are said to rest and to stretch themselves. Both species amused themselves in frequently jumping and clinging to the top of the cage and throwing a somerset, or twisting themselves around after the manner of a squirrel, the tail being extended and showing to great advantage when thus expanded.' Sir Stamford also mentions another large beast of prey said by the natives to be found on the island, and which has been hitherto undescribed. It is called Rimau Rumbaug, and is represented by the natives as larger than the tiger and much more dangerous and destructive. It is not stealthy in its approaches, like the tiger, but rushes furiously and steadily straight forward and makes its way into villages and houses. It is stated to have a mane of long hair upon its head and neck, to have a tuft upon the end of its tail,

to be of a more uniform and darker colour than the tiger, and to have a larger and broader head. It has been seen in various parts of the country; but Sir Stamford never succeeded in obtaining specimens. It may be a species of lion."

"Who was Sir Stamford Raffles?" asked Sidney.

"He was Governor of Java and Sumatra while those islands were in the hands of the English," replied Miss Winston; "and his memoirs are very interesting on many accounts. He was one of the many people who begin life under great apparent disadvantages and succeed, by perseverance and industry, in obtaining honourable and useful stations among their fellows. I will find his memoirs for you to-morrow, and you can read them for yourself."

"One thing more, aunt," said Richard, as Miss Winston rose. "Is the leopard of which we have been talking the same as that mentioned in the Bible?"

"The same," said Miss Winston.

"Do you know whether any are found in Palestine at present?"

"I do not know. They appear to have

been very formidable there at one time, to judge of the way in which they are mentioned. I should like, Richard, to have you look out as many places as you can find in the Bible where leopards and lions are mentioned; and perhaps we may be able to throw light upon some of them."

CHAPTER V.

THE PUMA AND JAGUAR.

THE next day Mr. Crediton had appointed for the excursion; and by sunrise the boys were anxiously watching the clouds, which looked rather threatening. A few drops of rain fell about breakfast-time; and when they assembled at the table their grandfather pronounced that it would probably be a rainy day. The announcement was received with dolefully long faces.

"When it rains before seven it clears before eleven," said Sidney.

"Unless it keeps on," remarked Richard, —"which it certainly seems likely to do at present. Besides, if it rains this morning it will be too wet to go into the woods, even if it clears off at noon."

"You always look on the dark side, Dick," said Annie, rather impatiently.

"What is the use of casting such a gloom over every thing?"

"I think it is best to look at things as they are," replied Richard. "If it is going to rain, there is no use in saying that it won't, because it won't make a bit of difference. The clouds won't change for our plans."

"And it would not be very pleasant to get a mile or two from home and then be caught," said Sidney. "And you know, Annie, the rain always suits somebody, if it does not suit us."

This was wonderfully philosophical for Sidney, who was rather apt to be impatient under any disappointment; and, to say the truth, this sudden improvement was very much owing to his being deeply interested in Sir Stamford Raffles. He had just got to the invasion of Java, having skipped some of the preliminary steps; and he could hardly put it down long enough to eat his breakfast. Annie smiled rather mischievously and glanced at the book, one corner of which peeped out from under the tablecloth. Sidney laughed too.

"I don't care," he said, good-naturedly: "it doesn't make a great deal of difference

when one has something that one wants very much to do. And that is why I always like to have several things going on at once, —to have two or three irons in the fire, as grandfather says,—because if you cannot work at one you can at another."

"I agree with you, Sidney," said Mr. Winston. "It is a good principle, if it be not carried too far."

"I am sure I have things enough to do, and that I want to do, too," remarked Annie. "There are all the books in our bookcase need to be taken down and dusted and arranged. I have been wanting to set about it for several days; but there has not seemed to be any time, exactly. Then I have my collar to finish; and all the shells want dusting; and——"

"And, Annie," interrupted Daisy, "you know you promised, a long time ago, to make the waist to my doll's blue dress. Her skirt is done, and her pink ones are all wearing out, and the white ones are dirty."

"I think you make yourselves out to be pretty well provided with work," said Miss Winston. "Which of your irons will you begin upon, Annie?"

Annie hesitated. She would very much have preferred dusting the books,—an employment of which she was very fond; but she prided herself upon keeping her word, and she knew that she had promised. Besides, she was really very fond of Daisy and loved to give her pleasure.

"I believe I shall finish the doll's frock," she said, finally. "She seems, by Daisy's account, to be badly off for clothes."

Daisy looked very much pleased.

"And what will you do, Dick?" she asked.

"I am going to do some whittling," said Richard; "and if aunt will let me bring my chips into the house we will sit together, and Sidney can read to us out of his new book."

"To-be-sure," assented Sidney. "I think it is a great deal better to read aloud than to read to one's self."

"So don't I," said Annie. "But I am glad you do. Perhaps it may not rain, after all,—though it certainly looks very much like it."

"There are two signs of fine weather," said Richard, going to the window. "The

swallows fly high, and the smoke goes straight up."

"Neither of them can be always depended upon," remarked Mr. Winston. "I have seen swallows flying almost out of sight in a thunder-storm; and I have seen the smoke going straight up not five minutes before a rain which lasted all day. Still, generally speaking, it may be said that swallows fly low, and, as it were, skim the ground, before rain."

"Why do they do so?" asked Daisy.

"I suppose, the upper regions of the air becoming colder, the insects are driven to seek the surface of the earth and the swallows come down after them. You know when they are flying in circles they are seeking their prey."

"And how about the smoke going up?" asked Sidney.

"The air being lighter before rain and in damp weather, the smoke cannot float in it, and falls to the ground; while in fine, dry weather the air is heavier than the smoke, and sustains it as the coffee in this cup sustains this piece of toast. If I should put the toast into ether,—which is a very light

liquid,—it would drop at once to the ground."

"I thought weather-signs were all nonsense," said Annie.

"By no means," replied her grandfather. "Many of them are very reliable; and those who are used to an out-of-door life may guide their motions tolerably well by watching the motions of animals and plants."

"I have noticed one thing myself with respect to the chickens, especially in summer," observed Miss Winston. "If at the commencement of a shower you see them huddling under cover, the shower is apt to be a short one; but if they come out and go picking about, with their feathers wet, the rain generally lasts for several hours at least. I have always heard that when pigs are seen running about and squealing, carrying straws in their mouths, it is ordinarily a forerunner of a long storm."

"How can animals know any thing about such things?" asked Annie, rather incredulously.

"How they can, my dear, I cannot pretend to say; but no one can be in the habit

of observing them closely without coming to the conclusion that they perceive many things which are out of the reach of our senses. A very common instance is the power dogs possess of tracking animals by the sense of smell; and it is a well-known fact that they and other domestic animals show the greatest uneasiness before the coming of earthquakes. Thus, their senses being so much finer in some respects than our's, we can easily believe that they may be affected by variations in the state of the atmosphere which are so slight as to make no impression upon us."

"Please to tell us some signs of rain, grandfather," said Sidney.

"What are called false suns, or sundogs, are almost certain signs of rain," replied Mr. Winston. "I never knew them to fail, even in the dryest time. The apparent nearness of distant objects is another, but not so reliable a prognostic. When you see the leaves of the trees turn over, so as to expose their under sides, which have a grayish appearance, you may usually look for a shower; and this is especially the case with the silver poplar. Some flowers, like tulips

and the white bloodroot, close before rain. A limb which has been broken or badly sprained almost always aches before a change of weather."*

"Does your's, Aunt Louisa?" asked Richard.

"No, my dear; and that is one reason why I think we shall have a fine day after all. But it is full six hours before you will want to set out, and there will be time for many changes before two o'clock; and, that we may not have to weary ourselves in watching them, I move we all set about our several parts and duties,—Annie to her music, Daisy to her geography, and Dick and Sidney to recite their lessons, if they have them."

"I have mine," said Sidney. "I learned it before six this morning; and I know Dick has his, for he learned it last night."

Lessons were learned and recited, practice faithfully gone through,—even to the detestable scales and horrible exercises, as Annie called them,—and still the weather

* The reliability of some of these "signs" is not beyond question.

looked very doubtful. Annie set resolutely about making the doll's dress, and devoted all her energies to furnishing a nice fit, as the dressmakers say; Richard's carpenter-work began, under Daisy's delighted eyes, to assume the appearance of a charming little table, just right for the dining-room of the doll's house; and Sidney, in the midst of Sir Stamford Raffles, had just come across the description of the Rafflesi Arnoldi, the gigantic flower of Sumatra, growing upon the stem of another tree, measuring more than a yard across and weighing fifteen pounds,—when a beam of bright sunshine glanced into the room. Sidney closed his book and went to the window. It was really clearing off. The clouds were breaking away in all directions and rolling themselves into those round white masses sometimes known as cotton-balls, showing a bright-blue sky beyond them. It was already clear in the direction of the wind; and there now seemed every promise of a beautiful day.

The promise was fulfilled. Aunt Louisa had the little basket all ready, and at two o'clock the carriage landed them safely at

Mr. Crediton's, where boys and girls to the number of twelve were already assembled. Daisy concluded that she would rather ride with Aunt Louisa; and, indeed, the walk they proposed taking was rather too long for her, as she was much the youngest of the party and not very strong withal.

Half-past two was the hour appointed for starting; and Mr. Crediton never waited for anybody. Always punctual to a moment himself, he expected every one else to be the same; and he had trained the children so well in this respect that one of them very seldom came late to church, to Sunday-school, or to walk. On this occasion they were all ready, and set out in procession, Mr. Crediton leading the way and Richard and David Barton bringing up the rear. David was one of the village boys: he was about as old as Richard, and his very particular friend. He was a grave, earnest boy, and, though he was only fifteen, was already a communicant and a Sunday-school teacher. Annie and Kate were the oldest girls of the party. They had been accustomed to walk together always and to be entirely devoted to each other; but this day

Mr. Crediton had given them a hint before starting which rather annoyed Annie:—

"Enjoy each other's society as much as you can, girls; but don't be exclusive and make the others feel as if you did not want them. Remember that you are the oldest, and it is fully incumbent on you to entertain the rest."

Kate received this advice with her usual sweetness, and acted upon it at once; but Annie felt a good deal displeased, and at first seemed as if she had made up her mind not to enjoy any thing. But she was soon shamed out of this mood by seeing how agreeable Kate was making herself, and began to try to do her part, —rather stiffly at first, it must be confessed, and feeling as though it was rather unkind in Kate to enjoy herself so much in any society but her's.

The proposed route to-day was new to all the children except David Barton, who had proposed it to Mr. Crediton. After leaving the village, they struck across two or three fields, crossed the little river upon stepping-stones,—with a deal of fun and merriment on the part of the boys and

some timidity upon that of the girls; and then, entering a piece of woods, they followed a narrow path till they came to the mouth of a ravine or cleft, from which issued a pretty little brawling brook, which gurgled among the roots and stones and skipped over all sorts of small obstacles as though in a hurry to get out into broad daylight and end its course in the river. The sides of the ravine were very steep and rocky, and covered with beautiful ferns, mosses and all sorts of damp-loving, shade-loving plants. The bed of the stream was filled with stones of all sizes, which seemed to have fallen from the rocks above; and among these the brook wound, singing and fretting, with a murmuring sound beautiful to hear. The children uttered many exclamations of delight as they entered the gorge and began picking their way under the banks, which seemed to grow higher and to approach nearer as they proceeded. Annie began to look a little apprehensive.

"Are you sure we shall not lose our way?" she said to Richard and David, who had lingered a little behind the others.

"I don't know how we should," replied Richard, laughing, "unless we climb these rocks; and I don't think that would be an easy matter. The only thing we can do is to go on as far as we want to, and then turn and come back the same way. There seems to be no getting out."

"There is another way out," said David; "but I rather think it would be too long and too *scrambly* for the girls. But you need not be afraid, Annie: I have been all through here twice; and so has Mr. Crediton. Isn't it beautiful?" he continued, looking up to where the blue sky could just be seen though the pines and slender whispering birches. "How I do love to hear the pines whisper! It seems as if one could understand what they said, if there were only a little wind."

"They always make me feel sad," said Annie. "They remind me of all the sorrowful things I have ever known in my life."

"Nothing that is really and truly beautiful ever makes me feel sad," said David. "That is, out of doors, I mean; for things in books very often do. I am always happy

in the woods and fields. I should love to live out of doors."

"What are you sentimentalizing about there, Barton?" shouted Sidney, who had climbed up on a projecting rock to see the general effect, as he said.

"I am not sentimentalizing," returned David, rather indignantly.

"Well, hurry up, then. Mr. Crediton says we are almost at the end of our journey."

So it proved; for, on turning round the edge of a point of rock projecting from the bank, they found the party assembled in front of a beautiful little waterfall. It was about twelve feet high; and the water dashed down three or four rocky steps with a pleasant sound, subsiding at the bottom into a deep, still pool two or three yards across, beautifully transparent, and having a bottom of white gravel. The rocks around were green with the richest and smoothest mosses the children had ever seen. Above, the ravine still continued, narrower and more savage than before, and seeming almost choked with trees and fallen stones,—though David said there was still a path which came out finally about four

miles from the village. The children were anxious to explore it; but Mr. Crediton refused. "You must remember that we have to go home as well as to come out," he said; "and I venture to predict that you will all be tired enough by bedtime if we return the shortest way."

There was nothing to be said; for Mr. Crediton's decisions were like the laws of the Medes and Persians. So the idea was given up, and the whole party set themselves to work to find amusement, of which there was no lack. One of the little girls produced a couple of dolls, and, with two or three of her companions, constructed a neat little play-house in a niche of the bank, with carpet and sofas of the richest moss, a table of birch-bark, a dinner-service of the most sumptuous acorn-cups, and a soup-tureen of solid walnut-shell; and here they had a grand dinner-party. The boys waded into the stream, and climbed up on the rocks, and made the woods ring with their noise and loud laughter; while Mr. Crediton, surrounded by the elders of the party, busied himself in examining mosses under a magnifying-glass. At last Sidney reminded him

that he had promised to give them a lecture on panthers. The suggestion was received with general applause; and, the party being comfortably seated, out of reach of the spray, Mr. Crediton began:—

"The animal which is to form the subject of my lecture, young ladies and gentlemen, has a very wide range over the American continent, being found almost everywhere, from Patagonia——Where is Patagonia, Lizzy Barton?"

"Patagonia is the southernmost country of South America," replied little Lizzy, confidently. "It was in my lesson yesterday."

"Very good.—From Patagonia on the south, to the great lakes on the north, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific. It has, however, become very rare in the Northern States; and it is now about ten years since I have heard of any in this part of the country. It is known here incorrectly as the panther, and is sometimes called catamount and cougar. In South America it is called the puma, and sometimes the lion of America,—to distinguish it from the jaguar, which is called the American tiger. When it first became known to the settlers of North America,

The Panther. p. 152.

it was generally held to be a true lion, and is mentioned under that name by the early historians and travellers, who considered it a formidable animal. It is described by Lawson as 'about the height of a large greyhound, of a reddish colour, the same as a lion. It is very active, climbs trees with the greatest agility imaginable, and is very strong-limbed. His tail is exceedingly long, his eyes fierce and lively, large and of a grayish colour. His prey is swine's flesh, deer's flesh, or any thing else he can take.

"'No animal is so nice and cleanly in his eating. When he has caught his prey, he fills himself with the slaughter, and carefully lays by the remainder, covering it very neatly with leaves, which if any thing touches he never eats any more of it. It purrs as cats do, and even if taken young is never to be reclaimed from its wild nature. He halloos like a man in the woods when killed,—which is by making him betake himself to a tree, as the least cur will presently do. There the hunters shoot him. If not killed outright, he is a dangerous enemy, especially to the dogs who approach him. His flesh looks as well as any shambles-meat about town. A great

many people eat him as choice food; but I never tasted of a panther,' concludes good Mr. Lawson,—'so cannot commend the meat by mine own experience.'

"The account of this quaint old historian is confirmed by other and later writers in most particulars. Mr. Darwin, in his entertaining and instructive 'Voyage of a Naturalist,' gives the same account of the puma's neat habit of eating. He says that it covers the body of its prey with many large branches, and then lies down to watch. This habit is often the cause of his being discovered; for the condors, wheeling in the air, every now and then descend to partake of the feast, and, being angrily driven away, rise all together on the wing. It seems the puma has sense enough to learn by experience; for the herdsmen say that if he has been once betrayed in this way he never repeats the practice, but, having made one hearty meal on the carcass, he wanders far away and never returns to it."

"Then it seems he has more sense than some people," said Annie.

"You will find, before we finish with him, that we may learn several things of him.

South America seems to be quite a paradise for pumas, according to Dr. Darwin; and they abound in many parts to such a degree that hundreds are killed in a year. The great herds of peccaries and capybaras in the uninhabited parts, and the young lamas and cattle upon the pampas, furnish him with such an abundance of food that he is not much dreaded by the natives,—though this does not prevent him from killing a man now and then. His usual mode of killing his prey is by springing upon its shoulders and then with one twist of his powerful paws turning the head round till the neck breaks. The flesh is there considered excellent eating and is said to taste exactly like veal."

"I think I should take it on trust," said Kate. "I should not care to eat panther."

"All prejudice, my dear," replied her father. "Remember how long you held out about the eels; and yet you liked them very well, after all. But it is a little singular, considering the entirely flesh diet of th puma, that it should be good eating. The flesh of carnivorous animals is usually extremely rank, and even unwholesome."

"Bears' meat is good," said Charles Dean; "but bears do not eat much flesh."

"Not if they can get any thing they like better, such as corn or fruits."

"But is it true, sir, that the panther, or puma, is so wild?" asked Sidney. "I think I have heard of their being tamed; and those we saw in the menagerie were very gentle,—'as gentle as kittens,' the keeper said; and they looked so."

"No, it is not true. They have often been rendered very tame by kind and gentle treatment. Kean, the actor, had one which followed him about like a dog and delighted in being noticed and petted by visitors. Sir William Jardine, editor of the 'Naturalist's Library,' speaks of one which lived in an unoccupied room of the old College of Edinburgh, where it amused itself leaping and clinging about the joists and timbers, and by jumping in and out of a large tub of clean water, appearing to take great delight in his bath. His favourite amusement was playing with the feet of those who came to visit him,—'entirely after the manner of a kitten.'"

"I should rather be excused," said Rich-

ard. "Even the kitten makes her claws go through to my skin sometimes; and I can fancy that the claws of a panther might be still more objectionable,—especially if they have the same habit of sharpening their nails. Sid, do you remember old Punch sharpening his claws on Mr. Bushnell's leg?"

Sidney laughed.

"I believe the habit is common to many of the cat tribe besides the panther," said Mr. Crediton. "The natives of South America discover the neighbourhood of the puma and jaguar by examining certain trees to which the animals constantly resort; and Dr. Darwin saw the hard soil of Patagonia deeply scored with the scratches of the pumas. I believe they do it not so much to sharpen their claws as to tear off the ragged edges and points."

"What sort of places do panthers usually live in?" asked one of the girls. "I can fancy this hollow being a very good place for them."

"And your fancy would be correct. They have a great fondness for rocky ravines and almost inaccessible ledges, where they

can rear their young unmolested. They are very fond of their little ones, and will encounter any danger in their defence. I read, not long ago, a story of a gentleman who was riding through the woods in Arkansas, when his attention was attracted by some lamentable outcries; and, looking narrowly about, he perceived near the roadside what appeared to be a half-grown kitten, but in a very starved and miserable condition. Being, I suppose, a humane man, he dismounted, and squeezed the creature into the deep pocket of his great-coat, intending to leave it at a house a few miles farther on, where he was to stop for the night. The little thing made a horrible noise, to which he paid little attention, till he heard its outcries answered by a scream from behind, when, looking round, he beheld a large panther in full chase; and then, for the first time, he perceived the state of the case. The animal he had humanely picked up was a young panther, and the mother was bent upon rescuing her child."

"What did he do?" asked Annie and Kate together.

"He tried to disengage his protégé from

his pockets, in order to throw it to its mother; but the little wretch stuck to the lining with teeth and claws so tightly that he could not get it out, while every tug produced a fresh squall, which irritated the mother to frenzy. He could not get off his coat without a dangerous delay: so the only thing to be done was to put spurs to his horse and endeavour to escape by flight. The panther gained upon him, however; and, had his journey been prolonged, the issue would have been more than doubtful. But, just as his horse was beginning to flag, he came to the edge of the woods and within sight of the house where he expected to lodge. Three or four large dogs rushed out, barking at the noise they made; and the poor mother, seeing the case was hopeless, turned and sullenly retreated to the woods."

"Poor thing!" said two or three of the girls.

"I wonder what he did with the young panther?" added Sidney. "I should think he would have been careful how he picked up any more kittens."

"The story goes on to say that he carried the animal home and reared it. But, as I

only read it in a newspaper, I cannot vouch for its truth."

"It is a good story, at any rate," said David Barton. "Do panthers ever attack men unless they are provoked?"

"I believe not very often, unless they are wounded. The accounts given of their courage by different writers vary very much, some saying that they are cowardly and always fly from the face of man, and others representing them as very dangerous under all circumstances. I suppose they may be different at different times. For myself, I may say, frankly, that I would rather keep out of their way. The cry is quite enough for me."

"What is it like?" asked Kate. "Cannot you give us an imitation of it, father, as you did of the Indian war-whoop one day?"

"Something like this, then," said Mr. Crediton; and, after a moment's pause, he raised a cry which startled the whole party and made the little girls look actually pale, especially when it came back clearly but faintly repeated from the deep forest beyond.

"Hark!" said Sidney. "The spirits of the woods are answering you!"

"See if you can do it, Sidney," said Annie. "It is so curious to hear the echo come back."

Sidney succeeded in producing a tolerably-correct imitation; and in a few seconds it came back clearly re-echoed again and again.

"But come," said Mr. Crediton, after the boys had all tried their voices and their skill; "it is time to eat our supper. David, will you and Sidney and Richard go to the spring for a pail of water, while the young ladies set the table?"

"Why cannot we drink the brook-water?" asked Annie.

"The brook comes from the swamps above; and, besides, it is not so cold as that of the spring," replied Mr. Crediton. "Come, hurry, boys! We will have supper ready by the time you come back."

The three boys accordingly set off for the spring, which was not many rods distant. It bubbled out very temptingly from under the roots of a large pine; but, just as he was about to dip the pail, Sidney thought

he saw something suspicious at the bottom, and, looking more closely, perceived it to be a large dead toad. The boys looked rather blankly at each other.

"We shall have to drink the brook-water after all," said Sidney, "unless we undertake to clean out the spring; and that will take too long."

"I know where there is a much better spring than this, farther up the hollow," said David; "and if one of you will go back and tell them where we have gone, I will go and find it."

"I will," said Richard, "as I want to find some snail-shells for Daisy. Don't be long, or we shall eat up all the supper."

Ten minutes of what proved to be rather hard walking brought David and Sidney to the other spring, which gushed out bright and sparkling into quite a large stream from under the rocks and ran down the bank. The ravine was here much narrower, the sides more precipitous, and the tall hemlocks and pines nearly met overhead.

"What a savage-looking place!" remarked Sidney, as he looked around. "I think this

must be the abode of the goblin panther which answered Mr. Crediton. I wonder if he will be civil enough to give us a welcome?" And, as he finished speaking, he raised the panther-cry.

This time it came back at once, and with startling distinctness. It did not sound like an echo. There was a different expression about it altogether. The boys looked at each other.

"That's curious, though!" said David; and even as he spoke the cry was again repeated, two or three times together.

"That isn't an echo, anyway," Sidney said, in a low tone. "May-be it is an owl."

David shook his head. "I know all the owls that are found hereabouts," he replied; "and I never heard any thing like that before." He began to look about a little, and after a moment called Sidney.

"See this tree," he said, quietly, "how the bark is all scratched off. I say, Sidney, we had better get away from here." He took up his pail as he spoke, and they turned to go, but paused a moment to listen. Again they heard the cry: this time it seemed a little nearer. They

quickened their steps and soon rejoined their companions. Just a moment before they came in sight of the noisy party, Sidney paused:—

"Dave, we won't tell them what we have heard. It will scare the girls and make a fuss, if they believe it; and if they don't they will only laugh. We will tell Mr. Crediton if we get a chance."

David agreed. There was a general inquiry as to what had kept them so long.

"We found it farther than we expected," said David, quietly.

Mr. Crediton's quick eye saw that there was something amiss and that the boys wished to speak to him; and he contrived, while the girls were putting the finishing-touches to their arrangements, to draw them a little on one side. David gave an account of what they had heard, adding, "Sidney thought we had better not tell the others."

"Quite right; quite right," said Mr. Crediton. "Are you sure it was not an owl or some other bird?"

"Quite sure," replied David. "You know I have been in the woods a great deal; and I never heard any thing like it."

"I have not known of a panther in this neighbourhood in ten years," said Mr. Crediton. "Still, the thing is possible. The swamps which commence a few miles above here extend many miles in an almost unbroken wilderness; and the creature may have travelled down. We will have supper, —to which the girls are calling us,—and then go directly home. There is no danger for so large a party, even supposing it was a panther which you heard."

The table was now temptingly set out on a mossy rock, with bread and butter, cakes, dried beef and cold fowl, which the children had brought in their baskets. The boys took off their hats, the girls folded their hands, Mr. Crediton said grace, and they all sat down as best they might. The supper was discussed with excellent appetites, amid much laughter and merriment: only Sidney and David did not seem exactly in their usual spirits, and as they watched Mr. Crediton they perceived that he looked somewhat anxious in the midst of his jokes, that he seemed as if he were listening, and that he rather hurried the children, saying that it was late and they must be at

home before sunset. As soon as tea was over they took up the line of march for home, Mr. Crediton sending the oldest boys in front and himself bringing up the rear. He did not exactly believe that the suspicions of the boys were correct: still, he could not help acknowledging to himself that they were not impossible; and he drew a long sigh of relief when at last they emerged from the woods, now growing dark and gloomy, as the sun went down, and found themselves in the open meadows. Home was soon reached. The children bade good-night to the minister and to each other, and most of them were soon asleep. Sidney privately mentioned his adventure to his grandfather when he got home. Mr. Winston was rather inclined to laugh at the idea, but allowed that it was possible, and praised the boy's discretion and firmness; and Sidney went to bed quite happy and too tired even to dream. If he could have cast a glance into the recess where they had taken their supper, he might have seen a large and graceful animal, about as tall as his pointer, but not so heavy, come cautiously down the rocks, often pausing to

look about her, and, after taking a drink at the brook, begin a hungry search after the pieces of dried beef and halves of biscuits, —the remainder of the provisions which the children had emptied out of their baskets that they might have more room for their stones and mosses, little dreaming that they were leaving them for the panther's feast.

The next day was what the children called a company-day. A carriageful of people arrived in the morning, and two or three gentlemen came to dinner: so that Aunt Louisa had her hands full, as well as Annie, who was learning to be quite an efficient help upon such occasions. The boys slipped away after dinner and went up to see Jack Short, carrying with them some of the dessert-dainties which they thought he might fancy. Sidney had not said a word to Richard of his adventure at the spring: he was nervously afraid of being laughed at as being deceived by his own excited imagination; and, after all, it hardly seemed possible that any wild beast could have ventured so near the village. They found Jack much better. He was now able to sit up in

bed and use his hands; and as they entered he was busily employed in whittling. His pale, thin face flushed with pleasure at the sight of his visitors.

"I didn't know as you were coming again," he said, as he resumed his occupation.

"We should have come yesterday," said Richard, "but we were out in the woods all the afternoon. But what made you think we would not come again?"

"Oh, I don't know. I always thought you felt above me because I was only the son of your grandfather's tenant."

"That's nonsense, Jack," said Sidney, shortly. "We never felt above you for any such reason; and, to speak plainly——"

"Go ahead," said Jack, as Sidney paused.

"The reason we did not associate with you more was because we did not like your ways nor the company you kept. That is plain talking, I know; but it is the truth, and I always think truth is the best."

"So do I," said Jack, blushing a little; "and I don't blame you a bit. But that did not hinder you coming to see me when I was sick."

"And it won't hinder our doing any thing else we can for you," returned Richard. "But I don't believe you will care so much for such things when you get well again: at least, I hope not."

"So do I," said Jack. "I feel as if I had had a kind of warning, some way. I hope I shall be able to go to school next winter," he continued, after a little pause. "Father says I may and welcome; but I am so much behind the other boys I should feel kind of ashamed."

"You might go on learning while you are laid up," remarked Sidney.

"I can't study, nor do much any way," said Jack, sighing. "My head gets to aching very soon. But I can read a little, and perhaps I may study as I get better. I would try, anyway, if I had anybody to help me."

"I will help you," said Richard; "that is, if grandfather is willing; and I am sure he won't object. And we will lend you any of our books."

"You are very kind, I am sure," replied the sick boy, in rather an embarrassed man-

ner. "I don't know how I shall ever pay you."

"We don't want to be paid," said Sidney, smiling. "We don't do such things for pay."

"But when a fellow does you a good turn you like to do him a good turn back again, don't you?" argued Jack. "It don't make you feel any less obliged to him, but it kind of takes a load off: don't it?'

"To-be-sure," agreed Sidney: "anybody does. But what are you carving those pretty little crosses for? They would be nice for silk-winders."

"That's just what I intended them for. I thought perhaps your aunt would like them to put in her work-basket. They a'n't much, to-be-sure; but——"

"I am certain she will be very much pleased," said Richard. "She was wishing for some yesterday, and I meant to make them for her; but you are much handier with the knife than I am."

The winders were indeed very pretty, being made some of them of cedar and others of black walnut, carefully polished

and nicely proportioned. Jack looked very much gratified.

"I'll make her something better than these when I am able to get about again, —if I ever do," said he. "I love to tinker at such things. Oh, by-the-way, I forgot to tell you something. Mr. Wilbur was up here this morning, and told father that one of his hogs was killed and almost eaten up in the woods near Dean's Hollow last night; and, from the tracks they found, he is pretty certain it was a panther that did the mischief. Just think!—a panther within a mile of the village!"

"I knew it was!" exclaimed Sidney, much to the surprise of his companions. "I was sure of it; and so was Dave Barton."

"Sure of what? What do you mean?" asked Richard, wonderingly.

"Sure it was a panther that we heard at the upper spring after you left us last night." And Sidney again described the incidents, adding, "I believe Mr. Crediton thought so too, though he didn't say so."

"I thought it was queer your being so quiet and his hurrying us so," said Rich-

ard. "I am glad you did not say any thing about it. How scared the girls would have been!"

"May-be not. All girls a'n't so easily scared as you'd think for," remarked Jack. "No shame to them, either, if they had been; for a panther in the woods is no joke. I declare, Sidney, it makes me shudder to think how near you might have been to him. As likely as not he was right over your heads, for they are wonderful creatures to hide. Erastus Waterman says they have a way of lying down flat and clinging to a limb, so that you might look right at one and never see him."

"He was not very far off, I know," said Sidney. "I can tell you, I felt a little queer when we went back: I thought he might be after us. So it really was a panther! Did they catch him?"

"No, nor won't in a hurry. They tracked him up the hollow, past the fields, and into the swamp,—which is snug quarters enough for him. I shouldn't wonder if there was a pair of them; for they almost always go in couples. To think of those little girls playing about, and such a creature perhaps

watching them all the time! I almost wish I hadn't told you."

"I don't," said Sidney. "I am glad of it."

"Because you like to know that you were right," remarked Jack.

"Partly, and because I like to know every thing just as it is. But come, Dick; we shall not be home to tea if we don't hurry."

"I say, boys, will you bring me some books?" asked Jack. "I should be so glad; and you don't know how dull it is lying here from morning till night."

"We will, to-be-sure," replied Richard, —"as many as you want. I remember when my leg was broken I thought I never knew the use of a book before."

After a little more conversation, the boys took their leave, promising to call again soon, and carrying the silk-winders with them. They found Annie waiting for them at the gate, evidently full of impatience to tell them something.

"Only think, boys!" she began, almost before they got within hearing: "a panther has been tracked into that very hollow where

we were last night. He killed one of Mr. Wilbur's pigs. Only think of our mimicking them and laughing about them with one so near, and the boys going off by themselves, too!"

"They were a good deal nearer than we were, it seems," said Richard. "They heard it scream two or three times while they were gone after water, and found a place where it had scratched a tree. They told Mr. Crediton; and that was the reason he was in such a hurry to get us out of the woods."

"But why didn't you tell the rest of us?" asked Annie, rather displeased for a moment. "I think we ought to have known."

"What was the use?" asked Sidney. "It would only have frightened the little ones and made it so much the more troublesome to take care of them. It would not have made any difference in the danger,—if danger there was; and they might just as well enjoy their walk."

"To-be-sure," assented Annie, after a little reflection: "it was the very best way; but I don't believe I should have done it.

But honestly, now, Sidney, don't you feel glad it was a real panther?"

"Well, now that there is no danger from him, I must say I do," said Sidney, laughing; "but I thought so all the time. Have the people gone, Annie?"

"Yes, half an hour ago, and I have been wondering where you were. Aunt is going to tell us about jaguars after tea."

There was no lack of conversation at the tea-table. The panther was of course the all-absorbing topic; but Jack's silk-winders were produced and very much admired. Even Annie, whose prejudices against poor Jack were in no wise abated, pronounced them very pretty and that it showed a proper feeling in him to make them. She demurred a little, however, to their lending him their books, and still more at the idea of Richard's helping him in his studies, and appealed to her grandfather as to whether it would be proper.

"Very proper, my dear, if Jack only continues in the same mind after he gets well enough to study. I am not afraid of Richard's being hurt by teaching the poor boy

vulgar fractions,—supposing him to have advanced so far in his education."

"You would not let Dick play with him last summer," persisted Annie.

"Richard was younger then, and the circumstances are not the same. I should not like now to have him in the habit of spending his time idly around the mill in the company of Jack's former associates; but, now that he seems desirous of leaving off his old habits and improving himself, I do not think Dick, or any of us, can employ ourselves better than in lending him a helping hand. I confess, my expectations as to the results are not very sanguine; but there is no harm, but, on the contrary, a great deal of good, in trying."

"Come, aunt; now for our lecture," said Richard,—"unless you are too tired. We shall listen with more interest than ever now that we have really been in the neighbourhood of a wild animal."

"I am going to get some cotton to wind on Jack's winders," said Miss Louisa. "Meantime, you can be settling yourselves to your liking."

This was soon accomplished, Daisy taking

The Jaguar. p. 177.

her seat between Richard and Sidney. Contrary to her aunt's expectation, she had not appeared to be alarmed by the panther-story, though she was quite excited about it, and asked Sidney a great many questions, seeming to regard him as quite a hero.

"The jaguar," began Miss Winston, "is the tiger of this continent. It is a very beautiful animal, of a rich yellowish colour, marked with many spots of deep chocolate-brown, the markings being arranged in rings and open spots upon the sides and back. There is a black variety, in which the spots are scarcely to be distinguished; and white ones have occasionally been seen. The jaguar is much more heavily and powerfully built than the leopard, and seems greatly to excel it both in strength and courage. Its muscular force is amazing. D'Azara relates that, a jaguar having struck down a horse in the neighbourhood where he was, he gave directions that the carcass should be drawn within gunshot of a tree where he intended to pass the night, knowing that the jaguar would return to his prey, and hoping thus to have a fair shot

at the robber. This arrangement, however, was unexpectedly frustrated. While he was gone to prepare himself, the jaguar returned from the opposite side of a river, drew the carcass of the horse, some sixty paces, to the water's edge, and then, taking it in his mouth, swam with it across the river, landed it, and drew it into a wood on the other side. All this took place in plain sight of a person whom D'Azara had left to watch."

"I did not know that any of the cat kind would take to the water of their own accord," remarked Richard.

"The jaguar does so frequently; and it has even been said that he indulges in the amusement of fishing. He drops some of his spittle on the water; and, when a silly fish comes to see what it is, a clever blow of the paw lands him high and dry on the bank. However this may be, it is certain that he is a good swimmer, as the poor woodcutters of the Parana know to their cost,—since several of them are killed every year on board their own vessels. He seems to like almost any thing in the shape of animal food, from horses and cattle to tur-

tles and their eggs. Humboldt says, 'We were shown many shells of the turtle emptied by the jaguars. These animals follow the turtles to the beach when the laying of the eggs is about to take place. They surprise them on the sand, and, in order to devour them at their ease, turn them in such a manner that the under shell is uppermost. In this situation the turtle cannot rise; and, as the jaguar turns many more than he can eat in one night, the Indians often avail themselves of his cunning and malignant avidity. When we reflect upon the difficulty the naturalist has in getting at the body without separating the upper and under shells, we cannot enough admire the suppleness of the tiger's paw, which empties the double armour of the turtle as though the adhering parts had been cut by means of a surgical instrument. The jaguar pursues the turtle quite into the water when not very deep: it digs up the eggs, and is one of the most cruel enemies of the young turtle when lately hatched. It pursues the monkeys to the tops of the tallest trees; for it is much more expert in climbing than the leopard. The great herds

of capybaras (a species of gnawing animal about as large as a pig) and peccaries (an animal closely allied to the hog, but larger) furnish it food in the uninhabited districts. It is said that the jaguar has sometimes been suffocated in a crowd of these animals, and that he is rather shy of falling in with them, sometimes climbing a tree to get out of their way. He is, however, very apt to avenge himself upon the last ones of the herd for the inconvenience the others have caused him.'

"The jaguar is considerably dreaded both by Indians and whites, who do not willingly venture where he is known to haunt. He does not, however, seem very much inclined to attack man; and the Indians aver that if there be a dog in the company he will take it in preference. Still, he is at times very dangerous. A story is told of a very large jaguar which entered a church in Santa Fe and killed two priests, one after the other, as they came in. A third priest, who came to see what the matter was, narrowly escaped with his life; and the animal was then shot from one corner of the church unroofed for the purpose. Humboldt tells of an adven-

ture he had with one on the banks of the Orinoco. While picking up some spangles of mica, he discovered the recent footprints of a jaguar; and, on raising his eyes, he saw the animal itself lying under a tree about eighty paces off. He candidly remarks that no tiger had ever appeared to him half so large."

"That was rather worse than hearing the panther," said Annie. "What did he do?"

"I guess he ran away as fast as he could," said Daisy.

"Nothing of the kind, my dear. He could not have done a more foolish thing than that, as the jaguar would be certain to pursue him. He says, 'I walked quietly on, avoided moving my arms, and I thought I perceived that the jaguar's attention was fixed upon some capybaras which were crossing the river. I then began to return, making a wide circuit towards the edge of the river. As the distance increased, I thought I might accelerate my pace. How often was I tempted to look back and see that I was not pursued! Happily, I yielded to this desire very tardily.' Humboldt and his companion came several times in con-

tact with this animal; and on one occasion it carried off a large dog which had accompanied them in their travels. In proof of the statement that the jaguar has no particular fondness for human flesh, he tells the story of a little Indian boy and girl, who were sitting on the grass of a savannah, or natural meadow, near the village of Atuces, when a large jaguar came bounding from the neighbouring forest and began playing with the children. His frolics, which were very gentle at first, began to grow rather rough; and at last he struck the little boy so hard upon the forehead as to draw blood. Upon this the little girl took up the branch of a tree and struck the animal, which ran off without doing them any further injury, and seemingly as good-natured as ever."

"That was very singular," remarked Richard.

"Animals often take such freaks," replied Miss Winston. "Sometimes it has happened that a lion has killed in succession three or four dogs which have been put into his den for companions to him, and then taken a violent fancy to a fifth, which,

instead of showing fear, has barked at him or perhaps boldly seized him by the mane. Cats, and especially those which have lost their kittens, have been known to adopt rabbits and even young rats; and I myself knew of a cat which, compassionating the forlorn state of a young and orphaned woodchuck, kindly gave it a place among her own kittens. My uncle once had a large turkey-gobbler which used to collect together a large quantity of hens' eggs, hatch them himself and bring up the chickens with the greatest care imaginable. It is possible that the jaguar, feeling himself perfectly secure of his prey, played with the children as a cat does with a mouse; but I am more inclined to think that, being probably full fed and in good spirits, it was inclined to a good-natured frolic, and only drew blood by accident, as the best-disposed cat will sometimes do."

"What sort of a noise do jaguars make?" asked Daisy.

"Their voice is said to resemble the lion's roar more closely than that of any other animal; and they are very noisy creatures, roar-

ing frequently during the night, especially in and before stormy weather."

"That reminds me," said Sidney, "Jack Short says that panthers cry and scream in the woods like a person in distress in order to induce people to come to them and be devoured. Do you think there is any truth in it, grandfather?" he concluded, appealing to Mr. Winston, who had just entered the room.

"I am inclined to think it merely the hunter's superstition," replied Mr. Winston. "They have many strange fancies, you know."

"I do not wonder at it," observed Miss Louisa. "There must be something very exciting to the imagination in the life they lead, away in the deep woods day after day, with no companions except their dogs, hearing all sorts of strange noises and seeing things in strange lights. It is no wonder they grow superstitious."

"I have always wanted to sleep in the woods a night or two," said Sidney.

"You must get Erastus Waterman to take you out upon some of his tramps," replied his grandfather. "He is the best

woodsman I know of, and can give you much valuable information about out-of-door matters; and he is a very harmless, good fellow besides. I presume he is all in a fever of excitement about this panther-story; and I prophesy that if the animal is to be shot he will be the one to do it."

"I hope he will," said Richard: "it would make him happy for the rest of his life. Is there any more about the jaguar, aunt?"

"I believe we have exhausted the subject, except that the animal is said to be much annoyed by the yelping of foxes, which follow him and keep up a continual clamour which betrays his movements."

"I wonder if they do it to warn the other animals?" said Daisy.

"I hardly imagine they are so disinterested as that. Probably they pursue him, as the jackal and hyena do the lion, in order to feast upon what he leaves."

CHAPTER VI.

THE TIGER AND LION.

TRUE to their promise, the boys set out next day to carry down some books to Jack Short. Sidney selected his favourite "Northern Regions,"*—an excellent choice, for more reasons than one: first, as being a very interesting book, and secondly because it was so nearly in pieces already that a little more rough usage could do it no harm. After a good deal of consideration, Richard decided upon the "Youth's Cabinet of Biography,"* to which he added "Robert Dawson"* and "The Two Carpenters,"* thinking that Jack might possibly learn a lesson from one and his parents from the other. When they showed their selections to Annie, she agreed that they had made a very good

* Published by the American Sunday-School Union.

choice; but she advised them to put paper covers on the books, and offered to do it herself, as she was remarkably neat in all such matters. Richard demurred a little.

"It will look as if we were afraid he would spoil them."

"Never mind if it does," said Annie. "Just tell him that you covered them so that they need not get injured so easily. And, besides, I really think it will be an improvement to them,—especially to the 'Northern Regions.'"

Jack was sitting up in bed, busy with his knife as before; but, for a wonder, his mother was with him. His eyes sparkled at the sight of the neat brown-paper covers, and still more at the pictures. Mrs. Short, on the contrary, looked a little annoyed. "I don't see what you are going to do with all these books, Jack," she remarked, "except make your head ache and use up your sister's time reading to you. People that are reading forever never do any thing else they ought to."

"I don't know about that, mother," said Jack. "It seems to me as if they did."

"No doubt you know more about it than any one else," said Mrs. Short, peevishly;

"but I never saw any good come of poring over books. It may do well enough for those that haven't any thing to do but amuse themselves; but it a'n't the thing for poor folks."

"It makes poor folks rich folks sometimes," remarked Richard, good-naturedly. "Some of the most learned and useful men in the world have begun poor boys and worked themselves up. I recollect hearing my grandfather tell of a friend of his who used to take his Greek grammar with him when he went out to milk, and stick it in a crack of the fence to keep it open, so that he could look at it now and then while he milked; and he is now one of the most learned professors in the country. Dr. Franklin was a poor boy; so was Mr. Webster; and so have been many others who are now rich and respected. My grandfather's family were poor, I know; and he got his education by working for it."

Mrs. Short looked but half convinced. "It may do for men, perhaps; but it a'n't the thing for women, anyway. My father always said the Bible and the cookery-book were library enough for any woman, and

that learning only made them neglect their domestic concerns."

Sidney could hardly repress a smile, as he looked at Mrs. Short's slatternly person and at the dirty, comfortless room, and contrasted both with the neat, economical and elegant housekeeping of Mrs. Crediton and the ladies whom he knew.

"I wish you'd get a cookery-book, mother," said Jack. "I mean to make you a present of one the first money I earn," he added, seeing his mother look displeased; "and then you will have a complete library according to grandfather's notions."

"You had better try to pay a little of what's been done for you," retorted Mrs. Short, colouring. "A pretty return you make for all my care of you!—just as soon as you get a little better, going and saying before strangers that you never have any thing fit to eat,—you ungrateful boy!"

"I didn't say so," said Jack, sullenly.

"You said just as much; and I should think you would be ashamed of yourself—that you should—making out that you never have any thing done for you, when I have been worked off my feet taking care of you!

But you'll find out some day, when I am dead and gone, what it is to have a mother." So saying, she bounced out of the room.

Jack looked very much annoyed and disturbed. "Isn't that pleasant?" he said. "I didn't mean any thing, I'm sure; but she does take one up so."

"I think perhaps it would have been better not to have said it," replied Sidney, in his quiet way; "but I am sure you did not mean any harm. I would not worry about it," he continued, seeing Jack's eyes filled with tears. "I dare say she won't think any more of it."

Jack passed his hand over his eyes. "I'm so weak, or something, every little thing makes me cry," he said, apologetically. "I've cried more times since I was sick than ever I did before in my life."

"Don't think any more about it," said Richard. "I will read to you a while; and then we must go home to dinner."

Richard began the "Northern Regions," and read the first two chapters, Jack whittling away industriously all the time. When he had finished, they rose to go.

"How well you read!" said Jack. "I

have to spell ever so many words; but you go right on, as smooth as can be."

"You would soon get over that if you would read aloud every day" said Richard, suppressing a smile at the idea of his having to spell words in reading. "I expect you will get on famously when we begin our lessons together."

"Are you in earnest?" asked Jack. "When will you begin?"

"Next week, perhaps, if you are well enough: you must not be in too much of a hurry, or you will make yourself sick again. I will ask grandfather about books, and we can talk it over the next time I come."

Jack lay a long time after the boys had left him, partly thinking over what Richard had read, partly wondering what made the difference between his new friends and himself. There was certainly a great difference; for he could not help feeling as though it were an honour for them to come and see him. Richard was no older, and he was not by any means so strong or active as himself. To-be-sure, his grandfather was a very rich man and his father was a captain in the navy; but Jack did not think that was it.

Tom Hayward's father was very rich; and yet nobody thought of respecting Tom. It certainly was not because he was so well dressed or so handsome; for Richard was not a handsome boy, and his every-day clothes at least were of the very plainest description. Jack could not come at any solution of the problem which satisfied him: so he plunged into the "Northern Regions," and read till he began to dream; and Sarah Anne, coming in, found him asleep with the book over his nose.

"Now for tigers!" said Richard, after tea.

"Do tigers come first, or lions?" asked Sidney.

"Tigers, I should say," said Annie. "We have begun at the smallest and gone upwards; and lions are larger than tigers."

"Are they?" asked Sidney, doubtfully. "A lion's mane makes him look very large in front, and he holds his head higher; but I should say there was not much difference in the weight. Aunt," he continued, as Miss Winston entered, "which is the largest, —the tiger or the lion?"

"I should say the lion," replied Miss

Louisa. "He is the strongest, at any rate, and seems to possess more intelligence."

"And to have a better disposition," remarked Annie.

"Why, as to that," said Miss Louisa, "perhaps the less we say the better. A great many grand qualities have been attributed to the lion, which we may find, upon examination, do not belong to him any more than to the rest of his family. The lion has a very noble and majestic expression of face; and people have, perhaps, been too hasty in reversing the popular proverb and concluding that 'handsome does that handsome is.'"

"Which shall we have to-night?" asked Daisy.

"The tiger, I think,—though we may have time for both. I had reserved the lion for the end of the cat kind, or genus Felis, as he is generally regarded as the type of that family."

"I do not exactly know what you mean by that expression," said Annie,—"though I have often seen it in books."

"I mean that the lion combines more of the characteristics of the genus Felis, and

those in greater perfection, than any of the rest of the tribe. Thus, he possesses the greatest strength and agility, the most piercing sight and the most daring courage: his claws are perfectly retractile, and his tongue has the horny points most perfectly developed. I might enumerate other items; but I think these will be sufficient to make you understand what I mean."

"So you would call the eagle the typical animal of the birds of prey?" said Annie.

"True. So we will leave the lion till the last, and take up the tiger. Are you all settled?"

"I am settled," said Daisy, producing her knitting, (which began to make quite rapid progress,) and seating herself upon her favourite stool by Annie.

"We are all ready," echoed Sidney. "Please begin, aunt."

"The tiger, as you probably know," began Miss Louisa, "is a native of the warmest regions of the globe. It seems, however, to have considerable power of resisting cold, as Bishop Heber, in his admirable Journal, states that it is found on the Himalaya Mountains quite up to the glaciers; and he

The Tiger.

adds that the cold does not seem to diminish either its size or its ferocity. Even upon the Asiatic continent its range seems to be rather limited, as it is rarely or never found west of the river Indus. It is not uncommon in China, and is found in Sumatra and Java, as well as so far north as the great deserts which separate China from Siberia. But the hot and fertile plains of Hindostan, with the neighbouring islands, seem to be the tigers' paradise. Here they increase and multiply to an amazing extent, and cause the death of many human victims every year. This is especially the case in the neighbourhood of Singapore, where men and women are almost daily carried away from the close neighbourhood of the town.

"The tiger grows to the length of six feet exclusive of the tail, and is usually about two feet eight inches high at the shoulder. His colour is a tawny yellow, very bright and lively when the animal is in health, passing into pure white underneath and brindled with black bands and stripes. The tigress is ordinarily said to be less lively in colour than her mate; and the young are grayish, having the stripes very

obscure. Tigers are occasionally found almost white. The head is well proportioned; the eye is fierce and lively and has a scowling expression; the jaws are massive; the teeth, especially the canines, are very large, and the general expression extremely grim and ferocious. The whole figure of the tiger is elegant in its outlines; and nothing can exceed the grace of all its movements, even when pacing to and fro in the narrow limits of a cage. We can easily imagine what they must be when the animal is at full liberty."

"I am afraid I should not appreciate his beauty in that case," said Richard, laughing. "On the whole, I prefer to see him in his cage."

"But wouldn't you like to see one for once, Dick?" asked Sidney. "If you were in a safe place,—on the back of an elephant, for instance,—wouldn't you like to see a tiger-hunt?"

"Yes, I suppose I should," replied Richard, "if I got engaged and excited about it. Is the tiger really as ferocious as he is said to be, aunt?"

"I suppose," said Miss Louisa, "that,

taking him all in all, he is the fiercest of all wild beasts. Nothing escapes his fury when roused by revenge or hunger; and I have seen it stated that they will even devour one another. The tigers of a district usually have their especial haunts, to which they constantly resort. A very favourite one is the neighbourhood of a spring or pool, or a watering-place in the river, to which all the animals of the neighbourhood resort for water. Here, about the close of day or at dawn, the tiger takes his station, and, carefully concealing himself in a crouching attitude, his head laid on his paws and his eager ear taking note of every sound, he awaits his prey. First come the more timid creatures,—the birds and squirrels,—which he disdains to meddle with; then the antelopes and all the several herds of deer, among them the niel-ghie, the largest and stateliest of the tribe in India. He is not long in selecting his victim. A horrid roar or growl is heard, and with one tremendous bound he springs upon the luckless animal, crushing his head with a blow of his immense paw. Then, taking it in his mouth, he carries it away easily enough to his den.

Should a flock of wild peacocks chance to approach his covert, however, he may give up his sport for that time: since, the moment they catch a sight of the monster, they begin to strut around him with trailing wings and expanded tails, making all the noise in their power, till every creature within hearing is apprized of his whereabouts."

"That seems very odd," said Sidney. "I wonder why they do it."

"That I cannot tell you; but the fact is said to be well attested. The leading bull of a herd of buffaloes will often perceive the neighbourhood of the tiger and actually drive him away.

"When the tiger obtains a taste of human flesh, he prefers it to all other food, and will take the utmost pains to attain it. These man-eaters,—as they are called,—which are said to be usually females, commonly select a lair in the neighbourhood of some village, where a ruined fort or temple, deserted and overgrown with weeds, affords them a convenient shelter. Here they take up their head-quarters; and woe to the villager who ventures out after dark or who seeks a secluded place to perform his ablutions. He

is almost certain to become the prey of the man-eaters. Women are carried off, children are constantly missing, and every one is in distress and terror. At last, perhaps, a party of British officers come into the neighbourhood, and the head-man of the village waits upon the sahibs with an humble petition that they will deliver them from their cruel foe. The sahibs, on their part, wish for no better fun. Elephants are procured, rifles made ready; and in a few days the dreaded man-eater lies dead before the feet of her enemies, who will lose no time in singeing off her whiskers, saluting her in the mean time with a variety of expressions more forcible than select, addressed to herself and all her ancestors."

"Why do they singe off her whiskers?" asked Annie.

"In order that they may not be haunted by the spirit of the tiger, which is sure to appear to them (as they believe) unless they go through this ceremony."

"That story of the man-eater reminds me of something I found in looking for texts about leopards," said Richard. "It is in Isaiah v. 6:—'Wherefore a lion out of the

forest shall slay them, a wolf of the evening shall spoil them; a leopard shall watch over their cities: every one that goeth out shall be torn in pieces.' That seems something like it, does it not?"

"Very much," replied Miss Louisa; "and, though I have never heard this habit attributed to the leopard, it may very probably belong to him, as he resembles the tiger in so many other respects."

"There is nothing said about tigers in the Bible, that I remember," said Sidney.

"No; and it appears that this animal was unknown to the Jews, as it was to the Greeks and the Romans, until quite a late day. Augustus had a tame tiger, which was the first one known to his countrymen; and, about forty years later, Claudius exhibited four at one time. A beautiful mosaic, which was dug up not long since at Rome, representing four tigers, is supposed to have been made in commemoration of this grand display. In the later days of the empire, tigers were not uncommon in the shows; and it is said that the bones of one were found in the ruins at Pompeii."

"I should like to see a tiger-hunt," said Sidney.

"You may find many accounts of them in the works of writers upon India," replied Miss Winston. "The tiger is the favourite game of European sportsmen in that country; and, considering the mischief done by these animals, and the difficulty of destroying them without a large force of men and elephants, a tiger-hunt may be considered as among the most useful, as it is certainly among the most exciting, of field-sports. The very mention of one of these animals in the neighbourhood of an encampment of English troops is enough to arouse all the ardour of officers and men. All the elephants are put in requisition; and, with an immense number of followers, they move forward to the scene of action, which is often a thick jungle or a plain covered with high grass and rushes. But I will read you an account of one of these expeditions from the pen of an excellent sportsman, which will serve to show the way the affair is conducted, and the ardour with which the elephants themselves sometimes enter into the pursuit. We must consider our hero as

having set out from camp, with the usual array of elephants carrying white sahibs and of half-naked Indian followers on foot, all anxious to see the show, and ready to do their part by pressing, like a boy looking for a bird's nest, into every bush large enough to conceal a tiger.

"'We found immense quantities of game, wild hogs, the hog-deer, and the niel-ghie, (literally, blue cow,—a large species of antelope.) We, however, strictly abstained from firing, reserving our whole battery for the nobler game the tiger. It was perhaps fortunate that we did not find one in the thick part of the forest, as the trees were so close-set and so interwoven with parasitic plants and thorns that the elephants were often obliged to clear a way for themselves by their own pressing exertions. It is curious, on these occasions, to see the enormous trees these animals will overthrow at a word from the mahout or driver: they place their foreheads against the obnoxious object, twisting their trunk around it, and gradually bending it towards the ground until they can place a foot upon it. This done, down comes the tree, with cracking stem and upturned roots.

The elephant must be well educated to perform this duty in a gentlemanlike manner, without roaring sulkily, or shaking his rider by too violent exertions.'"

"They would be nice animals to help clear up a new farm," observed Richard: "only it would take a great deal to keep them."

"And it would be rather difficult to provide for their comfort in our northern winters," said Miss Louisa. "They are used in farming-operations in Ceylon, where the English planters teach them to draw a plough."

"What are parasitic plants, aunt?" asked Daisy.

"Parasitic plants are those which grow on other trees and plants. The gigantic flower discovered by Sir Stamford Raffles was a parasite."

"Well, come; let us get on with our tiger-hunt," said Sidney, rather impatiently. "We can hear about elephants and such things another time."

"'On clearing the woods,'" continued Miss Louisa, "'we entered an open plain of swampy grass not three feet high. A large

herd of cattle was feeding there, and the herdsmen were sitting singing under a bush, when, just as the former began to move off before us, up sprang the very tiger to whom our visit was intended and cantered off across a bare plain dotted here and there with small patches of bush-jungle. He took to the open country in a style that would have more become a fox than a tiger, who is expected by his pursuers to fight and not to run; and, as he was flushed on the flank of the line, only one bullet was fired at him ere he cleared the thick grass. He was unhurt; and we pursued him at full speed. Thrice he threw us out by stopping short in small strips of jungle and then heading back after we had passed; and he had given us a very fast trot of about two miles, when Colonel Arnold, who led the field, at last reached him by a capital shot, his elephant being in full career. As soon as he felt himself wounded, the tiger crept into a close thicket of trees and bushes, and crouched. The two leading sportsmen overran the spot where he lay; and, as I came up, I saw him, through an aperture, ready to effect a charge. My

mahout had just before, in the heat of the chase, dropped his ankee or goad, which I had refused to allow him to recover; and the elephant, being notoriously savage, and further irritated by the goading he had received, became perfectly unmanageable. He appeared to see the tiger as soon as myself; and I had only time to fire one shot, when he suddenly rushed with the greatest fury into the thicket, and, falling upon his knees, nailed the tiger with his tusks to the ground. Such was the violence of the shock that my servant, who sat behind, was thrown out, and one of the guns went overboard. The struggles of the elephant to crush his still-resisting foe, which had fixed one paw in his eye, were so energetic that I was forced to hold on with all my strength to keep myself in the howdah. The second barrel of the gun which I still retained in my hand went off in the midst of the scuffle, the ball passing close to the mahout's ear, whose situation—poor fellow!—was any thing but enviable. As soon as my elephant was prevailed upon to leave the killing-part of the business to the sportsmen, they gave the roughly-used tiger the *coup de grace*. It

was a very fine female, with the most beautiful skin I ever saw.'"

"I should say that elephant was rather inconveniently interested in the sport," remarked Sidney. "I should rather have one who would be contented to do as he was told. But I should think the elephants themselves would be likely to suffer. Their trunks hang down directly in the way."

"They are aware of that; and, as soon as they perceive the neighbourhood of a tiger, they raise their trunks high in the air, or else roll them up and pack them into a very small compass between their tusks. It sometimes happens that a tiger bolder than ordinary will spring upon the back of an elephant and endeavour by main force to bring him to the ground,—in which he sometimes succeeds. Usually, however, the elephant is able to shake him off,—in which case he either crushes him to death by kneeling on him, or gives him a kick, which breaks half his ribs and sends him flying perhaps twenty paces.

"But the tiger is often destroyed in a much less ostentatious manner. Sometimes it is killed by means of a poisoned

arrow shot from a bow placed with great nicety in the neighbourhood of the path where the tiger passes to drink, and so arranged by means of a cord that the tiger discharges it himself. Such is the skill with which the apparatus is arranged that he is almost invariably shot through the lungs or heart, and he is usually found dead near the spot. Another device consists of a spherical cage made of strong bamboos woven together with intervals of three or four inches between them. This apparatus is fastened to the ground, by means of strong stakes, in the place frequented by tigers; and under it a man takes his station, armed with three or four sharp, strong spears, accompanied by a dog or tame goat to give the alarm when the foe approaches. Thus provided, he wraps himself up in his quilt and goes to sleep, trusting to his companion to awaken him in time. Presently comes the tiger, and, after smelling all around, begins to rear himself against the cage, whereupon the man stabs him through the bars and almost always succeeds in killing him.

"Another way of destroying the tiger seems rather ludicrous,—though the poor

animal finds it any thing but amusing. The ordinary track of a tiger being ascertained, the country-people collect a great quantity of large leaves, and, after smearing them with a kind of birdlime, made of the crushed berries of an Indian tree, they strew them in abundance, with the sticky side uppermost, near the shady spots where the tiger is wont to resort. Woe to him if he treads upon any of these treacherous leaves! He begins by shaking his paw to remove the annoyance, and, not succeeding in that way, he rubs it against his head, by means of which his eyes and ears become covered. After a while the tiger begins to roll among the sticky leaves, and to howl in the extremity of his distress; and this brings the peasants to the place, who find no difficulty in destroying him. The tiger has also been taken in a box-trap with a looking-glass on the inside. The deluded animal attacks his own image, supposing it to be another tiger, and thus disengages the cover, which falls and takes him prisoner."

Daisy and Sidney both laughed at the idea of catching a tiger by means of his own picture. Richard seemed inclined to doubt it;

but Miss Winston said it was well authenticated.

"You know how a cat will often jump at her own image in a glass; and a canary-bird will spend hours fluttering before a mirror and looking behind it to catch the seeming bird.

"The tigress is very fond of her young, and will run any risk in defence of them. They are quite blind and helpless when born, and of a dark-grayish colour, very obscurely striped. If taken very young, they are easily tamed and become quite docile and even fond of their keeper, though they can never be rendered so complacent or so trustworthy as the lion; and you may have observed that the menagerie-people never venture to take the same liberties with them. The fakirs of India—who are religious beggars, something like the mendicant friars of Roman Catholic countries—are often accompanied by tame tigers, which they lead about by cords and which occupy at night the same lair with their master. To-be-sure, it now and then happens that a tiger eats up his reverend companion; but to persons of their way

of thinking this might seem a matter of small consequence. Other instances have been known of a strong attachment growing up between a man and a tiger. At one time there was in the Tower of London a tigress of great beauty, which had been allowed to range freely about the vessel in which she was brought over, and had become attached to many of the sailors, especially to one who was her especial keeper and feeder. On her arrival in the Thames and at the Tower, the bustle and noise in the neighbourhood produced such an effect upon her that she became very savage and sulky; and the man who had charge of the animals in the Tower, was unwilling to permit her former keeper, who came to see her, to enter her den. As soon, however, as the tigress perceived him, she fawned upon him, licked his hands and his face, and showed the most extravagant signs of joy, and, after her friend left her, cried and whined for the remainder of the day."

"How uncomfortable it must be to live in the midst of such creatures!" said Annie. "I think if I were in the neighbourhood of a tiger I should never go out of the

house without thinking he was at my elbow. I suppose, however, one would get used to it, as people do to living in the neighbourhood of a volcano."

"Where tigers abound in any considerable numbers, they generally contrive to keep themselves remembered," said Miss Louisa. "The natives are very much afraid of them at all times. It has sometimes happened that palankin-travellers have been placed in imminent peril by the alarm of their bearers, who on the first appearance of the dreaded animal put down their burden and take to flight."

"Cowardly rascals!" exclaimed Richard, indignantly.

"I think you judge them rather harshly, Richard. Self-preservation is, in each circumstance, the first thought of almost everybody; and it is hardly to be expected that the bearers should risk their lives for the sake of a perfect stranger, who, being usually armed, has a much better chance of escape than the naked and defenceless Hindoos. On one occasion, a gentleman travelling in this way perceived a very large tiger quietly reposing under the shade

of a bush not far from the roadside. Happily, the bearers did not see him, and trotted on, and the tiger, being either asleep or fully fed, suffered them to pass without molestation. In general, the natives are well informed as to the haunts and habits of the tiger; and some lives have been lost by the rashness of young officers in not attending to their counsels. I recollect one instance in which a native guide endeavoured earnestly to dissuade an officer who was travelling express from setting out before daybreak, as the country through which they had to pass was wooded and had been very much infested with tigers. The officer, in his self-conceit, thought the man was making excuses for his own laziness, and finally accused him of cowardice and falsehood. The guide said no more, but took his arms and went on before, and the officer followed, exulting, no doubt, in his success in overcoming obstacles. The moon was shining, and gave light enough to distinguish objects. They were proceeding along a narrow path, when a tremendous roar was heard, and a tiger sprang from the

thicket. The poor guide turned and held up his sword and shield to oppose his foe; but in vain: he was at once struck to the earth by the tiger, which seized him in his mouth, and, turning, looked the officer full in the face, growling like a cat over a mouse. The whole party were paralyzed for an instant; and before they could recover themselves the tiger had bounded over the bushes again and was lost to sight. They remained in the same place till daylight, and then searched the forest; but in vain: nothing was found of the man thus cruelly sacrificed except his sword (which he had retained for some little time) and a few traces of blood."

"I wonder how the officer felt?" said Sidney. "I think I should almost rather have been in the guide's place than in his."

"It almost cost him his life," replied Miss Louisa. "He had a severe fever; and he told people, long afterwards, that he hardly ever went to sleep—especially if he was a little unwell—without having the whole scene before him. It is to be hoped that he learned a lesson from it which would be of use to him in future."

"Aunt, do you think that story is true about the lady unfurling the umbrella in the tiger's face?" asked Annie.

"What is it?" asked Daisy. "I never heard it."

"The story is that a party of ladies and gentlemen were out upon a picnic-excursion, or some such thing, when they saw a tiger all ready to spring upon them. One of the ladies seized an umbrella and opened it in the face of the animal, which fled in alarm and gave them a chance to escape."

"It showed a great deal of presence of mind, if she really did it," observed Richard.

"Undoubtedly. But I do not think it a very probable story. The tiger very seldom shows himself before he makes his leap; and, after he had sprung, I can hardly suppose he would be likely, or, indeed, able, to turn aside for an umbrella."

"But if the tiger was only crouching ready for a spring," suggested Richard.

"In that case, it is possible that the animal may have been confounded by the suddenness and the very audacity of the action."

"I should like to think it true," said Sidney. "I like all stories about presence of mind."

"Oh, you may believe it, if you please," said Miss Louisa, smiling. "It rests upon very good authority; and it is undoubtedly true that the tiger, if disappointed in his first spring, will often retire sulkily without attempting it a second time."

"Do you know any more stories about tigers?" asked Sidney.

"Plenty more," replied Miss Winston, smiling; "but I must refer you to the books for them, as we have more than used up our time for to-night. To-morrow we will begin upon the lion,—the king of beasts, as he is called."

The next day proved altogether rainy. Rain, rain, a steady determined down-pour, from morning till night, entirely prevented any going out of the house. Sport retreated to his kennel, and lay with his nose on his paws, and a very disgusted expression of countenance, looking sometimes at the clouds, sometimes at the chickens, who were poking about in the rain, with their feathers all wet and draggled, and at the ducks, who

seemed thoroughly to enjoy it, gabbling and wagging their tails round the puddles in the barnyard, and every now and then making a waddling excursion down to the river-side. The children employed themselves as well as they could in various indoor tasks and recreations; and Richard and Annie had a famous game of battledore and shuttlecock in the hall, wherein Annie was actually beaten without getting the least out of humour! Towards evening it cleared up a little, and Sidney drove down to the village in the little covered carriage to get the letters and to do some errands for his aunt. He found the post-office—the usual village exchange—full of men, all talking about the panther, or "painter," as some of them chose to call it; and it was with some difficulty that he made his way through and got his letters and papers from David Barton, who acted as clerk for his father. There was quite a parcel of them; and, as David was tying them up for Sidney's convenience, he said,—

"They are all talking about the panther-hunt, Sid. Don't you wish you could go?"

"Yes, indeed: I should like it above all things. But I suppose they won't take any boys: will they?"

"Father said I might go if I like," said David, "but I know he wants to go himself; and I rather think I shall stay and 'tend store."

"Have they heard any thing more about the panther?" asked Sidney. "Has he been seen?"

"No, but his tracks have. Two pigs have been carried off from Bowker's farm; and Jemmy Bowker thought he heard him when he was out looking for his cows last night. But then Jemmy is afraid of his shadow; and if he heard any one say 'panther' while he was out in the pasture, he would think a whole pack of them were after him."

"They might say the same of us," said Sidney, smiling. "You know we had been hearing all sorts of stories about them just before."

"Yes, I know; and, if nothing had happened to make us certain that there was something in it, I should almost have

thought we had let our imaginations run away with us."

"So should not I," said Sidney. "It was quite too plain for that; and the sound was unlike any thing I ever heard."

"What was that?" asked one of the men, turning round.

"We were talking about hearing the panther," replied David; "and Sidney was saying he never heard any thing like it."

"No, I should think not," said the man. "I guess you were a little scared, weren't you? No shame to you if you were," he added, good-naturedly. "You needn't colour up so."

"They didn't act as if they were very much scared," said Erastus Waterman, who was sitting quietly among the talkers with his dogs at his feet. "It was no joke having a parcel of little young ones in the neighbourhood of such a beast; and if the boys had been very much frightened they wouldn't have kept it to themselves and never have told any one but the minister."

"Didn't they?" asked the man who had spoken before, and whose name was Dean.

"Not a word," replied Mr. Barton. "My

Lizzie never knew any thing about it till the next day. As likely as not she would have gone into fits if she had, for she is easily frightened."

"Well, they were brave fellows, that's a fact," said Dean; "and I for one will give them the panther's skin, if it is my luck to get it."

"I wouldn't promise it to any one if I were you, Jacob," observed Erastus, dryly. "The painter wears it himself just at present; and maybe he will wear it out before you get hold of it."

"And you won't promise to go with us?" said Bowker.

"I won't say I will, nor I won't say I won't," replied Erastus, slowly. "This is Friday, and you a'n't going till Monday; and there's room for a good many things to happen before then. I wish you good luck, boys, whether I do or don't. I'll take my traps, squire, if you've got them ready." And, pocketing his parcels and gathering up his long limbs, he took his departure, followed by his dogs.

"Depend upon it," said Mr. Winston, when Sidney repeated the conversation at

home,—"depend upon it, Erastus means to go after the panther himself. The old fellow will set out and get back, and very likely bring the animal with him, while the others are talking about it."

"I should like to go with him," said Sidney.

"He would hardly be willing to take you. Your inexperience might spoil his sport, and there might be some danger. At any other time I presume he would be glad of your company; and I should not object to your going with him and learning a few lessons in woodcraft. We will talk to him about it. Meantime, here comes your aunt with her lions and tigers."

"Now for the king of the forest," said Annie, as they seated themselves. "Why is he called so, aunt?"

"That I cannot tell you," replied Miss Winston. "He is seldom or never found in forests or even in thick jungles, but frequents mostly sandy deserts or the open grassy country, where a thin strip of bushes and high grass around the rivers and water-holes affords him as much cover as he wants. The lion is found in Asia from the Euphrates to

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the borders of China, and all over Africa. Its range formerly extended over Syria, Asia Minor and the northern parts of Greece; and some ancient writers have declared that it was formerly found on the Danube; but this is a disputed point. Herodotus—who, as you know, Richard, is the earliest of profane historians—says that the baggage-camels of Xerxes were attacked by lions in Macedonia; and that they were very common in Palestine we may learn from the constant allusions made to them in the Sacred Scriptures. They made their lairs in the thick groves which fringed both sides of the river Jordan, and were often driven from their retreats by the rising of the stream, which 'overfloweth its banks at the time of harvest.' At such times they were more than usually dangerous; and hence the expression, 'He shall come up as a lion from the swellings of Jordan.' Allusions to them in the Psalms are frequent and graphic:—'My soul is among lions;' 'Deliver my soul from the lions,' occur several times. 'Like as a lion that is greedy of his prey, and as it were a lion's whelp lurking in secret places;' 'The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat

from God.' Such are a few out of many instances where they are mentioned in a way to show that the Psalmist was familiar with their habits; and doubtless, in his experience as a herdsman, and during his long wanderings among the mountains, he must often have come in contact with them. The lion is with all the Jewish writers a symbol of strength and majesty; and it is in this sense that our Lord is called the 'Lion of the tribe of Judah.'"

"I know some verses about the lion," said Daisy, modestly; "but I don't know where they are."

"Say them, my pet," said Aunt Louisa; and Daisy repeated:—

"'The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.'"

"Right," said Miss Louisa,—"and very nicely repeated. The prophet Isaiah uses these expressions, intending by this beautiful figure to represent the perfect peace

and blessedness of our Saviour's completed kingdom, when wars shall cease and all violence and wrong shall be done away."

"I should like to live to see that time," murmured the little girl, half to herself.

"No doubt you will, my dear child," said her aunt,—"though perhaps not in the body."

"Are there more kinds of lions than one, aunt?" asked Richard.

"That is a disputed point," replied Miss Winston,—"or, rather, it has been so, for it seems to be now a well-settled fact that the maneless lion of Guzerat is really quite a different animal from the great African lion."

"A maneless lion!" repeated Annie. "I never heard of such a thing. One can almost as easily think of a wingless bird."

"Your comparison is more apt than you imagine, my dear: a bird has actually been discovered in New Zealand which possesses the merest rudiments of wings, and whose covering appears at first sight much more like hair than like feathers. It has of course no power of flight."

"I give it up," said Annie, laughing. "A

wingless bird is certainly more remarkable than a maneless lion. Where did you say they were found?"

"In Guzerat or Goojerat: the name is spelt in both ways. Get the atlas, Sidney, and look on the west side of the peninsula of Hindostan, and you will see the peninsula of Gujerat, bounded on the east side by the Gulf of Cambay, and on the other by the Gulf of Cutch and the great Western Runn. Do you see Ahmedabad?"

"Yes, here it is, between two rivers which empty into the Gulf of Cambay. One is the Mhye, and the other does not seem to have any name on the map."

"The other is the Subbermutty; and it is upon this that the maneless lion has been principally found, though it has been taken upon the borders of Cutch. It is curious that scarcely any of the natives of the country had ever seen or heard of the animals, though they were so numerous that Captain Smee killed eleven in a month's time. Their cattle had often been carried off, but they had always attributed their destruction to tigers,—which, Captain Smee says, are not found in the peninsula. The few herds-

men who had seen the animal called it the camel-tiger, because its colour resembled that of the camel."

"They must be a bright set," said Sidney, contemptuously, "to have such a number of great animals among them and never see them. One can imagine their overlooking a bird, or something of that sort; but a lion!"

"They are probably neither very keen sportsmen nor profound naturalists; and, having seen a large animal which carried off cattle, they were content to call it a tiger and let it go for that,—like your aunt Meredith, to whom every species of insect is either a bug or a butterfly."

"How large is this maneless lion?" asked Annie.

"There is not much difference, in that respect, between them and their African cousins, except that the lion of Gujerat is rounder and more bulky in body and has shorter legs. The tail is also much shorter. A male maneless lion, killed by Captain Smee, was eight feet nine inches in length, including the tail, and was three feet six inches high, weighing when the

entrails were removed, four hundred and ninety pounds. The impression of his paw on the sand was six inches across. It has a line of long silky hair along the ridge of the back-bone, and the under side of the neck and inside of the legs is fringed with the same. The general colour of the body is tawny, sometimes approaching to red, and growing white underneath; the tail is gray, becoming nearly white at the end, which is furnished with a tuft of blackish hair. Their appearance is dignified and majestic, and they are very courageous, showing great boldness even when struck by a ball, standing as if to face their pursuers and retreating slowly and sullenly. I am not aware that any specimens have been brought alive either to Europe or to this country."

"But all Asiatic lions are not maneless?" said Sidney.

"No. Maned lions are found in Hindostan, Persia and Arabia. Layard found many of them represented with crisped manes among the wonderful sculptures of Nineveh. It is a disputed point whether or not the lion of Arabia is a different species from that of Africa, or merely a variety."

"What is the difference between a species and a variety?" asked Richard.

"A species comprehends several essential differences in structure and habits, but a variety signifies merely an accidental difference in colour or shape,—usually of colour. Thus, the domestic cat and the wild-cat of England are plainly different species; but there are endless varieties of the former. Tame animals are much more subject to varieties than wild. The lion of Arabia and Persia is usually not so large as that of Africa, the mane is not so full, and that and the whole body is of a lighter colour. They are said to be ordinarily less brave; but Bishop Heber says, on the authority of his friend Mr. Boulderson, that no animal can be more courageous than the lion of India. When it sees its enemy approaching, it springs out to meet him open-mouthed, like the boldest of all animals,—a mastiff dog,—and dies fighting to the last. Sometimes it springs directly upon the elephant's head, and, by the immense weight and muscular power of his fore-quarters, drags him fairly to the ground."

"Now for Africa!" said Sidney, settling

himself in his chair, as if in expectation of a great treat.

"Sidney is expecting some good hunting-stories," said Annie, laughing. "I believe he cares more for them than for any thing else."

"Not more than for any thing else," said Sidney; "but I must confess I do like hunting-stories, when they are not too bloody; and I do not see that there is any harm in it, either."

"Certainly not," replied Miss Winston. "There is no more harm in hunting-stories than in any other tales of adventure; and I think them much more innocent than details of battles and sieges, with all their horrors and cruelties."

"But it does not follow that a man is cruel because he likes to hunt: does it, aunt?"

"A hunter may be cruel, no doubt," said Miss Winston; "but it does not follow that he must be. Still, I cannot understand the pleasure men and boys seem to take in shooting all sorts of harmless creatures, —such as robins, for instance."

"You don't call *that* hunting, do you?"

said Richard, in a tone of profound contempt. "I guess you would not catch Long John or Erastus Waterman shooting a bluebird. I remember, when I was quite a little boy, hearing John scolding a fellow who had brought away a nest of young squirrels, too young to eat their food or to be raised. I said to him afterwards, 'But I have seen you bring in twenty or thirty squirrels at a time for sale.' 'Ah, yes,' he said, 'but that's different. Nobody disputes but what men have a right to eat such creatures. When a squirrel is dead he is dead; and when *I* shoot him he don't know what hurts him.' "

"And that's true," said Sidney. "But now for our African lions."

"The African lion," said Miss Winston, "is spread over the whole continent, from north to south and from east to west; but the central and southern parts seem to be his peculiar haunts. There he finds springs and streams of water to allay his thirst, coverts in which to repose during the heat of the day, and, above all, an unlimited supply of food in the countless herds of zebras and quaggas, of antelopes, of all sorts of elands, springboks and oryx, which rove over those

immense plains, not to mention the stately and beautiful giraffes, and the young of the elephant, hippopotamus and rhinoceros. Thousands and thousands of these animals may sometimes be seen from some eminence, scattered over the country in close and friendly neighbourhood. The antelopes and zebras eat the grass of the plains; the giraffes crop the tops of the acacia or camel-thorn trees; the lechees or water-bucks seek the rivers and marshes, where, if you should follow them, you might chance to stumble upon a white rhinoceros, hiding his ungainly bulk in the long grass, rising from the bottom of the river, where he has been walking at his ease till the want of air forced him to come to the surface to take a long breath. A herd of springboks is disturbed, and the beautiful animals move off in magnificent bounds, rising every time higher than a tall man's head and clearing twelve or fifteen feet at a leap. A dozen or more of elephants are standing lazily under a shade, suckling their quaint little calves or fanning themselves with boughs. Presently the cracking of whips, the creaking of wheels and the shouts of drivers are

heard, and a train, consisting of two or three immense wagons drawn by long teams of oxen, a small herd of cattle, and perhaps two or three horsemen, come slowly into sight round the corner of a projecting rock. It is the caravan of some enterprising man who is taking out goods to trade with the natives for ivory, gems and skins, intending at the same time to lay down the course of rivers and determine the latitude and longitude of mountains, rivers and lakes. A fitting place selected, the camp is soon made. There are no tents to be pitched; for the white men will sleep in their wagons, and the natives who accompany them care nothing for shelter. Great fires are made, the cattle and horses unyoked, watered and carefully secured: a springbok or eland has been shot in the course of the afternoon, and there is fresh meat enough to satisfy the appetites even of the Hottentots, whose stomachs, according to their own proverb, have no bottoms. The naturalist of the party is on the alert, feasting his eyes upon the sight of so many beautiful and novel forms, at the same time not omitting to examine carefully the ground and the trunks

and leaves of the trees for insects. But all the party are heartily weary with their long march in the burning sun; and even the naturalist is disposed to rest. The Hottentots are still stuffing themselves over the body of the eland; but the white men are soon asleep, after looking carefully to their arms, loosening their knives in the sheaths and putting new caps on their rifles and revolvers. The replenished fire blazes brightly; the sky is beautifully clear and promises a quiet night and a fine day to-morrow. Finally the Hottentots have had enough, or there is no more to be had; and every thing is quiet in the little camp except the sentries, whose business it is to keep up the fires and maintain a strict watch."

"But where is the lion all this time?" asked Annie.

"He is not far off, and, we may be sure, has informed himself of all the movements of the new-comers; but he loves darkness rather than light, and does not care to stir at present. At last the half-moon goes down, and the lion ventures forth and goes to the river to drink. He lies down flat,

and drinks at his leisure, lapping like a cat, with a noise which may be heard at the distance of a hundred yards, and which is heard by the sentinels in the camp, who heap fresh fuel on their fire and draw closer together, while they listen awe-struck to the low, hollow and deep-drawn sighing moans which, without being loud, seem to fill the whole air. The lion is calling his mate, who finally joins him and in her turn lies down to drink. There is so much game in the neighbourhood that the travellers hope to escape without an attack; but the lion is savage and capricious, and there is no telling what he may do. So they look once more to their arms, and wait rather anxiously for the result. Presently the air resounds with the tremendous roar, and the ground shakes with the spring of the lion; and then echoes the clatter of innumerable hoofs, as the roused and frightened herds fly from their deadly foe. The oxen stamp and bellow, the horses plunge, strain at their bridles and are hardly restrained by the hands and voices of their masters from rushing on certain death. The lion has seized his prey; and, unless there be a company of them,

the travellers feel tolerably safe for the rest of the night, knowing that he will not exert himself to kill more than he wants for the time-being. The watch is changed, the travellers retire to their wagons, and all is quiet once more."

Sidney looked rather disappointed. "I thought you meant to make the lions attack the travellers."

"So I can if I please, for that is an event which very often happens; but, instead of drawing upon my imagination and my general recollection, I will read you a true story, told by a celebrated African traveller, Mr. Gordon Cumming. They had been a long time upon the road, and had encamped, much as our travellers have done.

"'All had retired to rest,' says Mr. Cumming, 'when suddenly the appalling and murderous roar of an angry and bloodthirsty lion burst upon my ear within a few yards of us, followed by the shrieking of the Hottentots. Again and again the murderous roar of attack was repeated. We heard John and Ruyter shout, "The lion! the lion!" Still, for a moment we thought he was only chasing one of the dogs round

the herd; but the next instant John Stofulus rushed into the midst of us, almost speechless from fear, his eyes bursting from their sockets, and shrieked, "The lion! the lion! He has got Hendrick! He dragged him away from the fire beside me. I struck him with the burning brands upon his head; but he wouldn't let go his hold. Hendrick is dead! oh, Hendrick is dead! Let us take fire and seek him." The rest of the people ran about moaning and yelling as if they were mad. I was angry with them for their folly, and told them that if they did not stand still and keep quiet the lion would have another of us, and that very likely there was a troop of them. I ordered the dogs, which were nearly all fresh, to be made loose, and the fire to be increased as much as could be. I then shouted Hendrick's name; but all was still. I then told my men that Hendrick was dead, and that a regiment of soldiers could not help him, and, hunting the dogs forward, I had every thing brought within my cattle-kraal, when we lighted our fires and closed the entrance as well as we could. It appeared that when the unfortunate Hendrick rose to drive in

the ox, the lion had watched him to the fireside, and he had hardly lain down when the brute sprang upon him and Ruyter, (for both lay under one blanket,) and, roaring as he lay, grappled him with his fearful claws, and kept biting him on the breast and shoulder, all the time feeling for his neck, which having got hold of, he at once dragged him away backwards round the bush into the dense shade. As the lion lay on the unfortunate man he cried, faintly, "Help me! oh, men, help me!" after which the fearful beast got hold of his neck, and then all was still.'"

"What a horrid story!" exclaimed Annie, shuddering. "I do hope you are satisfied, Sidney?"

"I think it was too bad!" said Daisy, half crying. "They might have helped him."

"How could they?" asked Richard. "They did every thing that was possible. You heard how one of them struck him over the head with the burning brands, which one would think might have made him let go if any thing would, for all wild animals are afraid of fire. But I did not

suppose a lion would take so much trouble to attack a man when there were cattle which he might have got with much less difficulty."

"It is said that the lion, like the tiger, sometimes acquires such a taste for human flesh that he will run any risk to obtain it; but ordinarily he prefers to prey upon quadrupeds. In the midst of such abundance, he is hardly ever enough in want to drive him out to hunt in the daytime; but when this is the case he is almost always dangerous. Dr. Livingstone and his party, however, once met one face to face in a narrow gorge, where there was no room either to pass or to turn out. The doctor looked at the lion, and the lion looked at the doctor: the embarrassment appeared to be mutual. The man was unwilling to retreat, for he felt certain that the creature would spring upon him the moment his back was turned, and he was equally unwilling to fire, for his gun was the only one in the company: it might miss fire, or he might miss his aim, and then their condition would be desperate. The lion on his part seemed equally at a loss what course to pursue. At last the

doctor fixed his eyes steadfastly on those of the lion, and uttered the words 'Begone!' in an authoritative tone, at the same time making with his hand and stick a gesture of dismissal. The lion returned him a dignified glance, and then, with a low growl, walked away with slow and majestic steps, leaving the pass clear for the travellers."

"Don't you think that sounds like rather a large story, Aunt Louisa?" asked Richard, somewhat incredulously.

"Not at all, my dear. Such things have happened repeatedly. The boers, or descendants of Dutch colonists in South Africa, frequently set out alone on horseback to hunt the lion, confident in the good training of their horses, the excellence of their rifles and their own courage and unerring skill as marksmen. One of them, Diedrich Müller by name, when returning from such an expedition, encountered a lion, which seemed determined not to let him pass without a difficulty. Diedrich at once dismounted, and, confident of his aim, levelled his rifle at the forehead of the beast: but, at the critical moment, the horse, pulling

at his bridle, which was fastened to the hunter's arm, caused him to miss his aim. The lion at once bounded forward, but stopped a few paces in front of Diedrich, who was now quite defenceless, his gun discharged and his horse running off. The man and the beast stood looking one another in the face for a few minutes, when the lion moved as if to go away. Diedrich began to reload his rifle; but at the noise he made the lion growled and returned to his former position. The hunter paused, and the lion again walked off, looking round and growling angrily, when the boer proceeded to ram down his bullet: this was repeated till the animal had got to some distance, when he quickened his steps and bounded off."

"I should not like to have been in his place when his gun missed fire," said Sidney, —"nor in his horse's either, unless he was a very uncommonly good-natured man."

"Professor Lichtenstein tells a story," continued Miss Winston, "which illustrates not only the capricious temper of the lion, but the great coolness and courage of these men, who are as it were brought up among them.

"'While we were passing near the Rich River Gate, and while our oxen were grazing, Van Wyck the colonist related to me the following interesting circumstance. "It is now," he said, "nearly two years since, in the very place where we now stand, I ventured to take one of the most daring shots that was ever hazarded. My wife was seated in the house near the door, my children were playing about her, and I was without, near the door, busied in doing something to a wagon, when, though it was mid-day, an enormous lion appeared, came up and quietly laid himself down in the shade upon the very threshold of the door. My wife, either frozen with fear or aware of the danger attending any attempt to fly, remained motionless in her place, while the children took refuge in her lap. The cry uttered by them attracted my attention, and I hastened towards the door; but my astonishment may well be conceived when I found the entrance to it barred in such a manner. Although the animal had not seen me, yet, unarmed as I was, escape seemed impossible. I glided gently, scarcely knowing what I meant to do, to the side of the house, up to

the window of the chamber, where I knew my loaded gun was standing. By a most happy chance, I had set it into the corner close by the window, so that I could reach it with my hand, for, as you may perceive, the opening is quite too small for me to have got in; and, still more fortunately, the door of the room was open, so that I could see the whole danger of the scene. The lion was beginning to move, perhaps with the intention of making a spring. There was no longer any time to think. I called softly to the mother not to be alarmed, and, invoking the name of the Lord, fired my piece. The ball passed directly over the hair of my little boy's head and lodged in the forehead of the lion, immediately above his eyes, which shot forth as it were sparks of fire, and stretched him on the ground, so that he never stirred more.'''"

The children drew a long breath as they heard the conclusion. "He was a bold fellow, as well as a cool one," observed Richard. "If the little fellow had stirred, the father would have shot him instead of the lion; and yet I don't see what else he could have done."

"It is one of the many cases in which the boldest course is the best," said Miss Winston. "I think the woman showed considerable strength, too; for if she had screamed and tried to run, as most people would have done, it would have been all over with her."

"Yes, she showed good spunk," said Sidney, approvingly.

"Aunt," asked Annie, "don't you think all these stories serve to show that the lion is not so ferocious as many other beasts of prey? It seems as if he never killed any thing unless when he wanted to eat it."

"I am inclined to think you are right, Annie; but perhaps some of this apparent magnanimity may be set down to the account of his laziness, for lazy he undeniably is, with all his strength,—which seems to exceed that of any known animal. A man is no more in his jaws than a mouse in those of a cat. He is able to drag off a heavy ox; and any smaller animal gives him no trouble whatever. A lion, having carried off a young heifer, was followed by his tracks, for fully four hours, by a party on horseback; and through the whole distance the carcass of

the animal was only once or twice discovered to have touched the ground. Another seized a heifer in his mouth; and though the legs dragged on the ground, yet he seemed to carry her off with the same ease that a cat does a rat. He also leaped a broad dyke with her without the least difficulty."

"I wonder," remarked Annie, "that when the lion is so strong he should be contented to live in such a narrow cage without even trying to get out. I should think it would be easy enough for him to set himself at liberty if he pleased."

"You must remember that the lions we see in the menageries are almost universally either born in captivity or taken while very young and brought up in the same narrow limits. Thus they never acquire a knowledge of their full strength; and very probably their muscles are not so fully developed as those of their wild race, who have to depend upon their own exertions for a supply of food."

"I suppose every thing must fly before them in the deserts where they live?" said Sidney.

"Not invariably," replied Miss Winston.

"The rhinoceros sometimes opposes them with great success when they venture to attack him,—which is not often; and Dr. Livingstone witnessed a conflict between a lion and an oryx (a large and splendid species of antelope) where the latter not only came off conqueror but actually killed his antagonist. The lion was crouched on a small rocky eminence, higher than his adversary, who stood at bay about twenty yards off, calm and collected, and presenting his beautiful head and sharp swordlike horns to the enemy. Several times the lion made a circuit, endeavouring to take the antelope in flank; but in vain, for he always found the horns opposed to him. At last, as if to bring matters to an issue, the oryx made a feint of retiring, when the lion instantly sprung and was received on his horns, which inflicted a severe wound. Three several times he repeated his attack, each time receiving a terrible hurt; and at the last spring the whole length of the horn was buried in his shoulder. He tottered and fell dead. The oryx slowly withdrew his horn, and, after a triumphant caper above his fallen adversary, trotted off. The Afri-

cans assured Dr. Livingstone that such combats were not unfrequent, and that the victory almost always remained on the side of the oryx."

"Is it true, aunt, that the jackal is the lion's provider?—that he finds his prey for him and afterwards takes his share?" asked Sidney. "I have read such a story somewhere."

"It was believed to be so for many years; but the case seems to be exactly the contrary. It is the lion who provides for the jackals and hyenas, who follow him in troops in order to take what he has left. It was also believed that the inferior animals would not venture to approach till the monarch had finished his meal; but recent travellers appear to have disproved this also; and, if we may credit a story Mr. Gordon Cumming tells, they do not even treat him with decent civility.

"Mr. Cumming, it seems, had shot three rhinoceroses near a fountain of water, and came after twilight, intending to spend the night near at hand and watch for lions, accompanied by his Hottentot servant.

"'On reaching the water,' he goes on to

say, 'I looked towards the carcass of the rhinoceros, and, to my astonishment, beheld the ground alive with large creatures, as though a drove of zebras were approaching the water. Kleinboy remarked to me that a drove of zebras were standing on the height. I answered, "yes;" but I knew very well that zebras would not be capering round the carcass of a rhinoceros. I quickly arranged my blankets, pillows, and guns in the hole, and lay down to feast my eyes upon the interesting sight before me. It was bright moonlight,—as clear as I could wish. There were six large lions, about twelve or fifteen hyenas, and from twenty to thirty jackals, feasting on and around the carcasses of the three rhinoceroses. The lions feasted peaceably; but the hyenas and jackals fought over every mouthful, and chased one another round and round the carcass, laughing, screaming, chattering and howling without any intermission. The hyenas did not seem afraid of the lions, though they always gave way before them; for I observed that they followed them in the most disrespectful manner, and stood laughing, one or two on each side, when any of the lions

came after their comrades to examine pieces of skin or bones which they were dragging away.'"

"That is another mistake of mine," said Sidney. "I always thought the lion would eat nothing but what he killed himself."

"Yes: I know that was one of the stories. If you should believe all that the old writers said of him, you would think him endowed with almost superhuman virtues. It was said that he would never attack a child or a young virgin, that he never ate any thing which was in the least putrid or defiled in any way, that he protected the inferior animals from their tyrants,—and much more to the same purpose. It seems to be true that they are capable of great affection and gratitude; and the old story of Androcles and the lion though very marvellous is not altogether impossible."

"What was that?" asked Richard. "I do not know that I ever heard it."

"Androcles was a slave who in the time of the Roman empire ran away from his master and escaped to the forest, where he wandered about in great distress till he found a cave, in which he took refuge and

where he finally fell asleep. When he opened his eyes he gave himself up for lost; for a large lion was sitting before him and earnestly regarding him. He was, however, a resolute man; and, as he gathered his senses together, he perceived that the lion did not seem disposed to attack him, but moaned and held up one of his paws, as though in great pain. Despair gave him courage: he took the lion's foot in his lap; and, after a short examination, he found that a thorn had penetrated the ball, causing great pain and inflammation. He extracted it and bound up the foot with moist leaves, much to the joy of the poor animal, which signified his delight by fawning upon and caressing his benefactor. Androcles remained in the cave a long time, subsisting upon wild fruits and the game which the lion brought him. At last, in some of his wanderings, he was seized by a band of soldiers and carried back to the city, where, after a long confinement, he was sentenced to be devoured by wild beasts for the amusement of the populace. He was fastened to a stake in the centre of the area, and a very large and fierce lion, lately

taken from the woods, was let loose. The creature sprang fiercely towards him; but, as soon as he came near, his whole behaviour changed: he sprang upon Androcles, covered him with the most extravagant caresses, and cried and howled for joy like a dog which meets his master after a long absence; while the man, on his part, was not slow to recognise his friend and benefactor. The story was told: the fickle feelings of the spectators were moved, and Androcles was at once set at liberty and presented with the lion which had shown so much affection for him.

"But we must bring our lion-stories to a close, as we have already made a very long evening of it. Are there any questions to be proposed?"

"You have not said any thing about the cubs," said Sidney.

"The lioness usually produces from two to four cubs at a birth, which are born blind. They are then fat and round like young puppies, and are brindled and obscurely spotted like young tigers. They mew like cats and are very playful. The mane begins to appear at the end of twelve

months; and at the age of eighteen months they begin to roar. The lioness becomes very savage when she has cubs, attacking with the greatest fury every creature that approaches her retreat. She is said to retain the same disposition in captivity; but one which I saw was as gentle as an old cat, —though she evidently preferred that her darlings should not be meddled with. She made no resistance when the keeper took one out and gave it to me to hold, though she watched my movements with great solicitude, rubbing her great head coaxingly against his hand and seeming much relieved when she had it safely back. It was as large as a good fat Newfoundland puppy; and I shall never forget the soft, warm feeling of its coat against my bare arms. I was a very little girl then; and I thought I should like to keep it for a pet."

"Is there more than one variety of lions in Africa?" asked Annie.

"The colonists reckon two, the yellow and the brown, one of which is much darker than the other; and there seems to be a black-maned variety, which is the most formidable of all. There has certainly been a

great variety in the colour of different individuals which I have seen; but it may have been owing to age. Now, as we have done with our cats, you may, if you please, Richard, go over the different characteristics of the genus Felis, that they may be clearly fixed in our minds."

"Retractile claws,—that is, claws which may be drawn back into a sheath; smooth fur, sometimes plain, but oftener spotted or striped; eyes with oval-shaped pupils and very sensitive, which give them the power of seeing in the dark, as it is called; very strong muscles; a rough tongue armed with horny points turned backwards; and——I believe that is all."

"You have forgotten one of the most important characteristics," said Miss Winston. "What is it, Annie?"

"He has not said any thing about the teeth," replied Annie.

"You may give an account of them, if you please. Tell the number of each kind."

"Six incisors, or cutting-teeth, above and below, in the front of the mouth," said Annie; "four canines,—two above and two

below,—which are the long teeth you see upon each side of the incisors; and eight grinding-teeth, or molars, in the upper jaw and six in the lower,—making thirty in all."

"Take your slate and write down the dental formula, as I showed you," said Miss Winston.

Annie did so, and, after a little consideration, handed it to her aunt. It read—"Incisors, $\frac{6}{6}$; Canines, $\frac{1}{1}:\frac{1}{1}$; Molars, $\frac{4}{3}:\frac{4}{3}$."

"Quite right," said Miss Winston. "Try to keep this in mind, for it is very important. All the other parts of the skeleton invariably correspond in some manner to the character of the teeth; and it is by observing their agreement that naturalists are able to determine the general form and habits of an animal, and, as it were, reconstruct it, from a single tooth."

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CHAPTER VII.

THE WOLVES.

On Friday at sunset the rain cleared off before a brisk wind, and a beautiful moonlight evening was succeeded by a fine and pleasant day. On Saturday the children had no tasks except their Sunday-school lessons; but the girls had certain matters of sewing to attend to: even Daisy was learning to mend the little holes in her little stockings very nicely; and Annie took lessons in baking of her aunt, who was very skilful in such matters. Annie could make a plain cake as well as any one, and was rapidly progressing in other branches of the very necessary art of cooking. By eleven o'clock, however, all these affairs were disposed of, and the children were at liberty to do what they pleased with their time. It pleased them to put into complete order

their little log house, which had lately been rather neglected: the door was off one hinge, a pane of glass was broken out of the window, and the roof was out of repair, so that the rain came through at every shower. Both the boys were very expert in the use of carpenters' tools; and Sidney could set glass as well as any glazier. New shingles there were in abundance; and in a box in the garret devoted to such odds and ends Richard found a pair of old brass hinges, which, with a little cleaning and fixing, formed an admirable substitute for the bits of leather which had formerly answered the purpose. A broad flat stone was found and placed before the door, the ground around carefully cleaned and smoothed, and by the time the girls came out there was a decided improvement in the appearance of things.

"I wonder if we cannot do something to the walls to make them look better?" said Annie.

"Whitewash them," suggested Sidney. "But there is no lime about; and I don't think that would hide the stains, either. But we might paper them.'

"That would cost too much, if we had to buy the paper," said Annie; "and I don't think there is any to spare about the house."

"But with newspapers, Annie! There are hundreds of old ones up in the garret; and I dare say aunt will let us have them."

"And Jane would make us the paste," said Annie, "and the rest we could do ourselves. But what about the roof?"

"Oh, that may stay as it is," replied Richard. "The new shingles look very clean and nice, and we can make believe it is in the Gothic style, like the new church. Let us go and ask aunt."

Aunt thought it a very good plan, and told Annie where to find a large pile of pictorial papers and old magazines, which she thought would be very ornamental. Jane was ready to do her part; and, to crown their delight, Kate Crediton appeared in the midst of their operations. Kate was a host in herself when there was any work to be done: her pretty new muslin dress was quickly exchanged for an old calico wrapper of Annie's, and the work seemed to go on twice as fast and twice as well with her active assistance. By four o'clock it was

all done, the windows and floor nicely washed; and, while they were waiting for it to dry, Annie proposed that they should make another expedition to the garret and see what furniture they could find to add to the attractions of the mansion. They found Miss Winston there before them. She had selected a small old-fashioned table, with one of its legs somewhat injured, a couple of chairs, and a small flat-topped trunk, and was now engaged in looking for something in a large chest.

"I have been thinking," said she, "that this table would do nicely for your house. It is not very stylish, to-be-sure; but you can cover it with a cloth, and some day Richard can get some varnish and put it in order. The chairs will do very well, and this trunk will make a nice lounge if it is covered and cushioned. You will want some curtains; and here is a pair of chintz ones, which, though somewhat faded and shrunken, will be long enough for your short windows. You may, if you please, set your table and have your tea there instead of in the house."

This project was received with great applause, and all hands were at once set to

work to carry it into effect. The boys brought down the furniture and dusted it; the girls hung the window-curtains, and manufactured a cushion for the lounge of an old comforter folded to the right size and covered with chintz, which had, to-be-sure, seen some service, but was still whole and pretty. "New, gaudy calico," Kate remarked, "would be out of keeping with the rest of the furniture." When the arrangements were all completed, the table covered with a white cloth and neatly set out with cakes, bread and butter, strawberries and cream, and Daisy's own silver pitcher (that her great-aunt left her) filled with new milk, and all ornamented with abundance of flowers, Annie declared she had never seen a prettier tea-table. The only guests beside themselves were Sport and the kitten, now the best of friends, who had interested themselves very much in all that was going on, and who now came in for a share of the entertainment. Bruno had also been invited; but he declined, preferring to go to mill with John and the horses.

They were all in great glee, talking, eating and feeding the dog and cat, when sud-

denly Sport started up, and rushed out with a furious growl, which presently changed into something like a whine of fear.

"What ails the dog?" said Richard, rising; but before he could reach the door it was darkened by a man's shadow, and a head made itself visible.

"How d'ye do, young folks?" said Erastus Waterman, presenting his long figure more fully to view: "I've brought a kitten to show you." And as he spoke he threw down from his shoulders a large animal which he had been carrying. "There! a'n't that a pretty kitten?" he said to Daisy. "You never saw such a big cat as that, did you, Dolly?"

"What is it?" asked Daisy, half frightened, and shrinking back. "A bear!"

"A bear, indeed!" said Richard. "You never saw a bear of that colour, did you? I do believe it is a panther."

"That's so, Dick. I expect it is the very one you heard the other day at the spring. I thought you'd like to see him: so I brought him here first. A'n't he a beauty?" he continued, turning to Daisy. "See how soft

his paw is! Oh, you needn't be afraid: he's as dead as a critter can be."

Thus encouraged, Daisy ventured to stroke the head of the panther, and finally to examine his claws, and admire the size of his strong paws, which she could hardly span with her little fingers.

"Poor pussy!" she said, pitifully, as the boys were eagerly asking all the particulars of the hunt. "How lonely his poor mate will be! I wish things did not have to be killed, Erastus."

The old man smiled and stroked her head. "Sometimes I've wished so too, Dolly; but there don't seem to be any help for it. If we didn't kill the wild critters they would kill us, you know. It seems to be a kind of law of natur'; and I suppose it must be all right, or it wouldn't be so. Such little Dollies as you are the best off, that don't need to hurt any thing, but have friends to take care of them and teach them to be steady and useful folks. What a nice little house you have got here!" he continued, looking around: "all as neat as a new pin. I expect you are going to be a first-rate housekeeper, Annie."

"Come in and drink tea with us, Erastus," said Annie. "I want you to have some of my cake that I made myself."

"Why, I don't know. I a'n't fixed up for company exactly."

"Never mind," said Richard. "We like you better as you are; and we want you to tell us some stories. You haven't told us any this long time."

The old man smiled and suffered himself to be persuaded. He was very fond of children, and especially of our young friends at The Meadows, to whom he was always a welcome guest. Annie drew forward the great chair for him, and Daisy was soon on his knee, anxious to help him to every thing on the table and to hear all about a young crow which was being tamed for her. Sidney had run off to the house to call his grandfather and aunt.

"Look at Kitty!" said Kate, laughing. "She doesn't seem to admire her cousin much." In fact, Kitty, who had retired to the roof at the first bustle of the panther's arrival, was now regarding it at a respectful distance with immense disfavour, her back being up, and her tail magnified to a wonderful size.

She seemed doubtful whether she should not attack the stranger. At last, seeing that her enemy did not move, she ventured to approach a little nearer, and finally commenced a very minute and interested examination of the body.

"She's a pretty cat, and a smart one, too," said Erastus,—"though she can't compare to my Dick for size. But talking about knowing how to shoot, Annie; I heard not long ago of a case in which it turned out a very good thing even for a woman to be able to handle a gun. There was a man living up in the Black River country, quite away from any neighbours, who had occasion to go away for two or three days and leave his wife alone with her children, the oldest of whom was a boy about eight years old. They lived in a new frame house, which was not finished: it was not closed up at the bottom; the floor was only loose planks, and there was a hollow under it, where he meant to have a cellar some day. Well, it was just about nightfall: the woman had got her chores done up, and was thinking of putting the young ones to bed, when her eldest boy, who had been at the door for

something, came running in, and says, 'Mother,' says he, 'there's ever so many wolves down by the barn, in the edge of the woods. I heard them and saw them as plain as could be.' 'Hush!' says she, going to the door to listen. Sure enough she heard 'em; and presently—though it was getting pretty dark—she saw a wolf come to the edge of the clearing. He looked towards the house, and then threw up his head and gave one long howl,—a kind of signal-cry. She stepped in quick enough, shut and barred the door, and fastened the windows as well as she could by piling things against 'em. Then she made up a rousing fire; but she hadn't much wood in the house, and didn't dare go out for more, lest the wolves should come upon her."

"What was the fire for?" asked Daisy.

"To scare them," replied Erastus. "All wild animals are afraid of fire. She was very much frightened; for she knew the wolves would never be so bold if they were not almost starved, and she was afraid they might break in, in spite of her. Presently she heard something scratching like a dog; and, looking down through the cracks of the

floor, there, sure enough, she saw the shining eyes and ugly head of a wolf. She had sent the children up-stairs before,—for there was an upper chamber to the house, a kind of garret,—and she soon followed them quick enough, only stopping to take down her husband's gun, which hung ready loaded, with his powder-horn and shot-bag, on some hooks in the room. She had just got up the ladder, which wasn't very high, as the wolf forced up one of the planks and stuck his head through. She pushed the young ones back, and kneeled down by the top of the ladder, steadying the gun on something; and, just as he was trying to get his fore-paws up on the floor, she fired and shot him through the head. He gave one yell and dropped down dead. The noise of the gun and all scared the others, so that they retreated to the edge of the woods and never come near the house again all night, though they kept up a tremendous howling, and now and then one or two would come out into the moonlight and look towards the house, as if trying to get up their courage for another attack. I suppose it was a very long night to the mother and her children,

poor things! but morning came at last, just as it always does after the longest night, and the wolves disappeared. The neighbours got up a hunt the next day and killed several of them; and it turned out that there was a large pack."

"I didn't know that wolves had so much courage," observed Kate. "I thought they were very cowardly creatures."

"They are so in general, unless they are very hungry or there are a great many together; but when there is a pack of them they get very bold and savage, and are then as dangerous as any wild beast at all. When this country was new, I knew of several people, on horseback and in sleighs, who were chased by them and narrowly escaped with their lives. A wolf runs very fast, with a kind of long gallop, which he can keep up hours at a time, without being tired out; and it takes a very good horse to escape them when their blood is up."

"I recollect a frightful story about a man being chased by wolves in Sweden," said Richard.

"Don't tell it, if it is too horrid!" interrupted Annie. "Oh, I know what you

mean, Dick,—about the children. Don't tell that!" But the others were anxious to hear it, and Annie withdrew her opposition, only saying, "I don't more than half believe it, anyway."

"A man was sent, in the dead of winter, from one town to another in the North of Sweden, to carry some children. There were three of them,—orphans; and he was to take them to their friends, who I suppose meant to take care of them. So he had them in his sledge, all covered up warm, and the poor things were as merry as could be, chattering to him and each other about where they were going and the fine sights they were to see. Presently they began to be drowsy, and went to sleep, nestled down at his feet. After a while his horses began to go faster and faster, and almost to fly, in spite of his efforts to check them; and at the same time he heard what he at first took to be the moaning of the wind in the pines. He looked back and saw a dark mass upon the snow, which he soon perceived to be in motion; and he then understood the state of the case: the wolves were after him. At first he hoped to escape by the speed of his

horses, but it was too plain that the beasts were gaining upon him. Their howls awakened the children, who began to cry and scream; and the sound of their voices, while it gave fresh spirit to their pursuers, made the horses almost unmanageable. They were almost upon them, when some evil spirit, I suppose, put it into the man's head to save himself at the expense of his charge. He snatched up the eldest boy, and, in spite of his struggles, tossed him out upon the snow."

Daisy hid her face in the old man's coat. Richard continued:—"This checked the pursuit for a time, and he gained a little in the race; but the horses began to flag, the road was not good. Again the wolves were alongside, and another child was sacrificed. This time the delay was very short; and, while the youngest was clinging round his neck and begging him not to throw it to the wolves, a great monster leaped almost into the sledge, snatched the poor baby from his arms, and it was devoured in an instant. By this time the lights of the town were in sight: the dogs rushed out barking at the noise, and the wolves sullenly retreated.

He had saved his miserable life; but it was at the expense of his orphan charge."

"What became of him?" asked Erastus.

"His disordered appearance, the condition of his horses, and, above all, his own ravings, (for he was beside himself with fear and horror,) told the story. The people rose upon him, and would have torn him to pieces if the magistrates had not rescued him out of their hands. He escaped to another part of the kingdom, where he led a miserable life, hated by all who knew his story, and tormented by remorse, till, I believe, he finally killed himself."

"Much good his life did him!" exclaimed Sidney. "He had better have been killed at once, in the way of his duty,—the miserable coward!"

"Don't be too hard on him, my son," said Erastus. "It was a dreadful hard place. It seems a horrible thing to be devoured by wild beasts; and a man—a coward especially—would do almost any thing to avoid it."

"But you wouldn't do such a thing, Erastus, I am sure."

"I should hope I wouldn't be left to myself," replied the old hunter, solemnly.

"Human nature is a poor critter, my dears, if you take it at the very best; and the bravest man that ever lived has as much need to pray not to be led into temptation as the greatest coward that ever ran away from his shadow."

"In almost all the wolf-stories I have ever read," said Richard, after a little pause, "there seems to be a great number together. Do they usually hunt in packs?"

"They are very apt to, especially in winter. Some say that the mother and her young ones keep together till the cubs are a year old. Sometimes they seem to collect together for the purpose of hunting some one animal, and then separate again. They appear to have a real liking for each others' company,—poor brutes! it is only natural, as every thing else turns against them,—and, if a single wolf finds something to eat, he likes to invite others to share it with him. This sociable disposition of their's has saved people's lives sometimes, by giving them a chance to escape while the first wolf was inviting his guests. I remember one instance in particular, which happened in the north part of Michigan when that country

was new and wolves were plenty. A woman, who had a young child old enough to toddle about, looked out and saw a wolf busily engaged in burying something in a heap of shavings not far from the house. When he had finished, the brute ran off; and the woman, going to the door, missed her child. All at once it flashed upon her what the wolf had been about. She flew to the shavings, and there, sure enough, was the child, asleep and unhurt. The wolf had found it lying there, and after making all safe, as he supposed, had gone to call his friends, intending probably to come after dark and have a feast. I suppose it didn't take her long to get into the house that time."

"I wonder what the wolves thought when they got back and found their dinner gone?" remarked Annie.

"Perhaps they thought the wolf that invited them had been making game of them," replied Erastus; "and if they happened to be very hungry they may have eaten him instead,—for they do such things sometimes. I remember something such another case, in which a coloured man's life was saved by a fiddle!"

"A fiddle!" exclaimed Richard.

"Yes, by a fiddle and by his own presence of mind. He had been to a merry-making, and was going home at night with his instrument under his arm. I should not wonder if he had been drinking a little; for when he got about to the middle of a piece of woods he lay down under a little tree and went to sleep. By-and-by he was awakened by something pushing and smelling him; and, opening one eye cautiously, he perceived, to his horror, that an enormous wolf was busy about him, pushing the leaves over him with its nose. Though he was dreadfully frightened, he had the sense to lie perfectly still; and presently the wolf left him, and he heard its feet pattering off on the dead leaves. It didn't take him long to jump up and climb the tree under which he lay; and he was hardly seated in a crotch, with his fiddle under his arm, when the wolf came running back, attended by half a dozen others. They surrounded the tree, howling horribly, and looking up into its branches, leaping up and showing their white teeth, and even biting the bark of the tree in their rage. As I said, the tree was

a small one, and the branches were hardly stout enough to bear him; and he feared, besides, that they might try to gnaw it down. At last a thought struck him in his desperation: he seized his fiddle, and, tucking it under his chin, began to play furiously. Now, whether the coloured man played so badly, or whether the wolves were not fond of music, I can't take it upon me to say; but the fact was that when he had finished 'Yankee Doodle,' and looked around for his enemies, not one of them was to be seen or heard. He kept on playing at intervals till sunrise, and then descended from his perch and walked home, prouder than ever of his fiddle and fully determined never to go to sleep in the woods again."

"Here come grandfather and aunt to see the panther," exclaimed Daisy, as they were laughing over this story. "I wonder what they will say when they find it lying there?"

"Oh, I told them before I thought," said Sidney, colouring a little.

"Just like you, Sidney!" retorted Annie. "You never can keep any thing to yourself, —any thing like that," she added, seeing Sid-

ney look a little hurt. "Of course I don't mean any thing important."

The panther was duly admired; and Erastus had to tell over once more how he had found him in a tree and killed him with one shot.

"So you did not go with the others?" said Miss Winston.

"No," replied the old man, slowly, and smiling in his dry way. "There's so many of them, and they make such a noise, I thought I should do about as well by myself."

"I am glad he is disposed of," remarked Mr. Winston; "and I hope his mate, if he had one, will take the hint and leave the country. I cannot think how they came to stray down here at this time of year."

"They travel a long way sometimes, like wolves," said Erastus; "but both have been rare game in this part of the country of late years,—though they were plenty enough when you and I first came into these parts, 'squire, and for some time after. I suppose you do not remember hearing them, do you, Miss Louisa?"

"Oh, yes," replied Miss Winston, smiling.

"I was quite a great girl at the time of the hunt in the cedar-swamp."

"Tell us about it, aunt, please," said Annie. "I don't believe Kate has ever heard it."

"I should like to hear it again, at any rate," remarked Kate.

"You must know, then," said Miss Winston, "that, a great many years ago, I was coming home one moonlight evening from what were then our next neighbours, Mr. Smithson's family, who lived in a little red house near where the Gillet House now stands. I had been there to do an errand, with my oldest sister, your aunt Patty, and your uncle James, then a little boy; and they had persuaded us to stay to tea. It was about eight o'clock when we left there, a fine moonlight night. There was deep snow on the ground; but the ox-teams going to the mill had broken the road pretty well. Just as we got to where the great oak-tree stands by the stone wall, we heard a most singular sound—different from any thing we had ever heard before—down towards the barn."

"Where was the barn?" interrupted Kate.

"It stood where the great red barn now stands, but was a much less pretentious structure, being built of logs, with a pen at the side for the sheep. It stood just on the edge of a cedar swamp of considerable extent. We both started as we heard this cry; and I believe the same thought came into both our minds, though we did not give it utterance. We took James between us, and, holding each a hand, we hurried along through the snow as fast as we could. We had not reached the house, however, when we heard it again; and this time I spoke:—'I am sure it must be wolves, Patty.' She thought so too, and we both started to run,—for I was not lame then, and could run as well as any of you. As we reached the door we met my brother Richard. He had been in bed, for he was not very well, but had heard the wolves, and he and his father were coming to look for us. After some consultation, they took a lantern, and, going out to the barn, they drove up the sheep and secured them in a pen which had been made for some purpose close to the house. The cows and horses were in the barn and safe enough. I remember how I tried to

lie awake and listen; but I did not succeed very well, for I was young and healthy, and lying awake was not so easy then as it has since become."

"Well, and so——" said Sidney.

"And so," continued Miss Winston, "I slept soundly all night and never heard the wolves once. In the morning, as soon as it was light, my father and brother went down to the barn; and there was a curious sight. The wolves—there were seven in all—had been about the barn, round and round and round, trying to find some way of getting in, till the snow for the space of ten rods round was beaten as hard and as flat as a floor. After they had given up trying to get at the horses and cows, (which must have spent rather an uncomfortable night, poor things!) they had gone in single file, round the very edge of the clearing, till they reached neighbour Smithson's, where the woods came a good deal nearer the road. It seems he too had been alarmed after we left him, and had penned his sheep in the garden next the house. A light snow had fallen the day before and rested on the rails; and here it seemed that one wolf had

broken away from the rest and had come up to the garden. They saw the prints of his fore-paws on the snow of the top rail, as though he had prepared for a spring. His courage failed him, however; for the sheep were all safe, and the seven wolves were traced all together into another part of the swamp across the road, which is still standing."

"Where we found the liverwort, you know," said Sidney to Kate. "But go on, please, aunt, and tell us about the hunt."

"As soon as they returned to the house," continued Miss Winston, "Richard got on horseback and went all round the neighbourhood to call the men together for a hunt. Their plan was to surround the swamp, and then on a given signal to rush together, driving the wolves towards one end, where were posted about a dozen of the best marksmen, who were to shoot the animals as they appeared. At the beginning of the line they stationed a boy with a horn, which he was to blow as soon as the circle was completed, thus giving the signal for the rush. It took some time to complete the arrangements, and, as the boy

was walking to and fro on his post, he saw a large wolf coming directly towards him. In his alarm, the first thing he thought of was to blow his horn,—which he did: the people raised a great shout and rushed together; and, as the swamp was not more than half surrounded, nothing was easier than for the wolves to make their escape.

"Richard, as I said, was in very bad health at that time; and when he came back after giving the alarm he was so tired that mother persuaded him to lie down. But when he heard the noise he could remain quiet no longer, and, though he had no gun, he went out towards the swamp. As he reached the edge of it, he raised his eyes and beheld three wolves coming towards him in single file. He raised his stick and gave a shout: the foremost wolf stopped short, and jumped up and down two or three times, as though quite beside himself with terror; and then, making a spring, he bounded clear over Richard's head, followed by the two others. And that was the last that was seen of the wolves."

"And so they never killed one of them!"

"Not a wolf! It appeared from their

tracks in the snow that every one of them took a different path, and ran off for about three miles, when they all met, as if by agreement, and proceeded together up the valley. I do not remember hearing of them after that, though there were a few in the neighbourhood some years later."

"There are a few always to be found in the counties south of here," said Erastus. "I got the bounty on three heads not more than a year ago. But I must be a-going, 'squire. I want to show my cat down at the village." And, shouldering his burden, the old man strode away as lightly as though it weighed no more than a feather.

"Don't wolves come next in our course of lectures?" asked Richard. "If they do, I think we have made a nice beginning."

"I had designed commencing with the domestic dog," replied Miss Winston; "but since we have, as you say, made a good beginning with wolves, I think we may as well continue them. Will you have your lecture here, or in the house?"

The children all thought it would be pleasanter to sit around the door of the playhouse in the twilight. As the evening

was so warm and dry that there was no danger of taking cold, Miss Winston consented. The girls hastened to clear away the remains of the supper, and were soon ready to sit down with their work, while Sidney gathered a quantity of oak-leaves and proceeded to make wreaths and trimmings for their dresses.

"The genus Canis, or the dog family," began Miss Winston, "is distinguished, like the genus Felis, by certain invariable characteristics, though there is even more variety in its different members. They are digitigrade; that is, they walk upon their toes only, instead of upon the whole foot, like men and bears. Their claws are not retractile, but are strong, blunt, and fitted more for digging the ground than for tearing or holding their prey. Certain varieties have the sole of the foot protected by hair, which renders their movements particularly noiseless. The ears are large, pointed and movable, sometimes erect like those of the wolf, sometimes drooping like those of the spaniel. The tongue is long, soft, and thin at the edges. The teeth consist of six incisors or cutting-teeth above and

below, four canine teeth, two above and two below, and six molars above and seven below on each side,—making forty-two in all. Of these the canines are very large, strong and pointed, and those of the lower jaw, as it were, clasp the others, thus giving mutual support in the act of tearing flesh and breaking bones. In some canines, as the domestic dog, the pupil of the eye is round: in the hyena it is elliptical above and circular below; while in the fox it contracts vertically, like that of the cat."

"I did not know that the fox belonged to the dog family," observed Kate.

"Yes, he is Sport's cousin, though not so nearly related as the wolf and jackal. The genus Canis comprehends the wolf, the domestic dogs in all their varieties, the wild dogs, dholes or dingos, the jackals, the foxes, and the hyenas. All these animals live more or less exclusively upon flesh, which they seem often to prefer in a putrid state; and most of them are somewhat social in their habits, collecting together for the purposes of hunting and defence. We will, if you please, begin with the wolf and take up the others in regular succession.

"The wolf has been noticed from the very earliest times, both in Europe and Asia; and we find frequent mention of him in Holy Scripture. He is associated with the religion or superstitions of many heathen nations, and is conspicuous in the curious mythology of the North of Europe. Odin, the All-Father, was attended by a wolf named Gold-foot; and the wolf Fenris was to play a conspicuous part in the last great destruction of all things, when even the gods themselves should cease to be. The sacrificers of the Gothic nations wore wolf-skin wrappers; and the priest among the Gothic tribes was the whoelf, or guelph."

"The Romans honoured wolves too," said Richard, "and held a feast in their honour called Lupercalia. They believed that the founder of their city, Romulus, was suckled by a wolf."

"One might almost be tempted to believe that there was some foundation for the story, judging from their cruelty and love of bloodshed," replied Miss Winston. "It is very commonly believed in Hindostan that the wolf occasionally adopts and nourishes infants, and that the children so

brought up partake of the characteristics of their foster-mother. The peasants in many parts of France and Germany believe to this day in the existence of wehr-wolves or war-wolves,—sorcerers, who are capable of assuming for a time the form and manners of the wolf, still keeping their own individuality, and under this guise working all sorts of mischief to the lives and property of their neighbours. It is believed that if the clothes of one of these human wolves be destroyed while he is in a state of transformation he can never return to his original form, but must forever remain in that of a wolf."

"How ridiculous!" exclaimed Kate. "I should think a magician would do much more harm in the shape of a man than in that of a wolf, if harm was his object."

"Popular superstitions, my dear, do not often pause to consider the reasonableness of a notion. The malignant sagacity which seems to belong to the wolf, his burning eyes, his fearful howlings, and, above all, his habit of constantly digging up graves in order to devour the remains of the dead, all conspire to point him out as an object

of horror to ignorant people, who are always prone to attribute to magic all that seems to them unnatural or unaccountable in the beings by which they are surrounded. The Hottentots have the same idea with regard to their great enemy the lion; and we have seen the East Indians singeing the whiskers of the newly-killed tiger to prevent him from haunting them."

"Are there many wolves still remaining in Europe?" asked Richard. "I supposed they would be almost exterminated,—from the western part at least."

"There are none remaining in the British Islands. Sir Ervan Cameron, a Scotch gentleman, killed the last wolf in Great Britain in 1680; but so late as 1710 wolves were slain in Ireland. In France and Spain they still abound to such a degree as to be very dangerous at times, particularly in winter, and that not only to herds but to men. The wolves of Spain are black, very large, (many of them being too heavy to be lifted by a man,) and remarkably bold and furious. Their chief haunts are in the mountains, where, as soon as it grows dark, they may be seen by the side of the road,

bounding along from bush to bush, keeping pace with the traveller or the muleteer and watching an opportunity to sieze one of the mules. In France and Germany they still abound, though rewards are offered for their destruction."

"I should think," remarked Kate, "that it would be a good thing for the French and German governments to employ some of their many troops in hunting wolves. It would be putting them to some use; and it would not be nearly so expensive as war. But perhaps these fine gentlemen might consider such a service beneath their dignity."

"I think that very probable," said Miss Winston. "One would think that if the people were allowed a free use of arms, and a suitable reward were offered, the instinct of self-preservation would lead them to destroy as many as possible of these mischievous animals. The Prussian government has recently adopted these or similar measures; and in Switzerland, when a wolf appears, the church-bells are rung, the men take their rifles, and the intruder is soon either killed or driven back to his old

quarters in France or Savoy. In Russia, Sweden and Norway, as might be expected, wolves are still very numerous. It is said that, in the course of the wars of Napoleon, Siberian wolves were found in Poland and even in Prussia,—they having followed the armies in their marches to feed not only upon the slain but upon the dead horses and other offal left in the track of the host. This well-known fact of wolves following in the march of armies may perhaps explain how the same varieties come to be so generally diffused over the whole of Europe and Asia."

"I suppose wolves are very cunning," said Daisy, who perhaps was thinking of poor little "Red Riding-Hood."

"In thickly-inhabited countries, where they have many enemies and are often reduced to extremities of hunger, they seem to become so. Colonel Hamilton Smith gives a very lively description of their habits, which I will read to you. He says,—

"'They never quit cover to windward; they trot along its edges till the wind of the open country comes towards them and they can be assured by their scent that no sus-

picious object is in that direction. Then they advance, snuffing the coming vapours, and keep as much as possible along hedges and brushwood, to avoid detection, pushing forward to the distance of many miles in a single journey. If there be several, they keep in file, and step so nearly in each others' tracks that in soft ground it would seem as if only one had passed. They bound across narrow roads without leaving a footprint, or follow them on the outside. These movements seldom begin before dark, nor are they protracted beyond daybreak. If single, the wolf will visit out-houses, enter the farm-yard, first listening, smelling the ground, snuffing up the air, and bounding over the threshold without touching it. Then he retreats: his head is low, turned obliquely, the one ear forward, the other back, his eyes burning like flame. He trots crouching, his brush obliterating the tracks of his feet, till at a distance from the scene of depredation, when, going more freely, he continues his route to cover, and, as he enters it, first raises his tail and flings it up in triumph. It is said that a wolf, when pressed by hunger and roaming around farms, will utter a single

howl to entice the watch-dogs in pursuit of him. If they come out, he will flee till one is sufficiently forward of the others to be singled out and devoured. But dogs in general are more cautious; and even hounds require to be encouraged, or they will not follow upon the scent.'"

"Are wolves fond of their young ones?" asked Annie.

"They are said to be very much so," replied Miss Winston,—"though they are somewhat severe in their family-discipline. Colonel Smith says that they punish their whelps if they emit a scream of pain, and will bite, maltreat and drag them by the tail till they have learned to bear pain in silence; but otherwise they seem to treat them well. Both parents unite in providing food for them; and the she-wolf keeps her young about her long after they are able to provide for themselves."

"Well done. I am glad there is something good about the poor thing," said Sidney. "I have always looked upon the wolf as the very model of all sorts of meanness, cruelty and treachery."

"There you are mistaken, Sidney. The

wolf has his excellences as well as his cousin the dog,—though I admit that they are neither so various nor so shining. Wolves in captivity have often shown great affection for those who have been in the habit of feeding or caressing them. Mr. Gosse tells a story, which he asserts to be perfectly well authenticated, of a pack of seventeen wolves who were seen upon the ice of a Canadian lake and pursued. Most of them immediately dispersed; but seven or eight remained together around one, to which they seemed to act as a sort of body-guard. After a while these also scattered,—all but two, who still remained faithful to their comrade, urging her forward, and turning from time to time upon their pursuers until they were shot down and the object of their solicitude captured It proved to be a she-wolf, very old and completely blind. She was quite helpless without her guides, and only cried piteously when she was taken, without attempting any resistance. The den was found not very far off; and, from appearances, it seemed as though all the wolves in the neighbourhood

were in the habit of resorting thither to bring her supplies."

"Ah, but they were American wolves!" persisted Sidney. "I dare say the European wolves are different."

"Sidney, for shame!" said Annie. "I think you might be willing to allow them as much merit as that. You have not said much about American wolves, aunt. Is there more than one kind?"

"Yes, several,—though their habits and varieties are not so well ascertained as they should be. The gray wolf of the Northern States and Canada corresponds very exactly with the gray wolf of Europe, so that one description may serve for them both. The hair is of a rusty-gray colour, hard and strong, and is longer and thicker on the neck and shoulders, forming a kind of mane. The nose is black, the upper lip and chin white, and there is a blackish band upon each wrist. The black wolf is found in the Southern States, and, like his brother of Europe, is larger and stronger than the gray variety. There is a dusky wolf found to the north of Canada, which is said to resemble the dog of the Arctic circle more than the wolf.

The prairie-wolf is a smaller and more cowardly animal, very destructive to sheep and calves, though seldom or never daring to attack man. It is still found in the Western States, though fast disappearing under the advances of civilization. The skin is much used for sleigh and carriage robes. The cayotte, coyote or coyott of Mexico is another variety, larger and fiercer than the last, but not so large as the Northern wolf. And now, if you please, we will return to the house; for the evening is growing quite damp. Our next lecture shall be upon dogs, about which we shall, no doubt, find stories enough to satisfy even Sidney."

The Dog. p. 291.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DOGS.

THE lecture upon dogs did not come quite so soon as the children had anticipated. The next day being Sunday, they had none, of course; but after their usual Sunday lessons were finished they occupied themselves in searching the Bible for allusions to dogs and wolves, and made out quite a list, to be ready against the next evening.

"I think the lecture upon dogs will be the most interesting of the whole," said Sidney. "There are so many beautiful stories about dogs, and they have such curious ways. I hope nothing will happen to prevent our hearing it."

"I have a kind of feeling that something will," remarked Annie. "I have an idea that we shall have company to-morrow: I don't know why, unless because we have been without so long."

"Why, yes," said Richard. "The hotel has been quite empty for the past two weeks. We have only had people to dinner three times, and then people from the city to spend the day, and Mr. and Mrs. Crediton to tea twice."

"They don't count, because they are just like our own family," said Annie. "But I think somebody will come to-morrow,—though I hope not."

Annie's prophecy was fulfilled the next day in the shape of their aunt Meredith, as the children called her, (though Sidney always insisted that she was only an aunt-in-law,) and her two children, Antoinette and Matilda. These two little girls—or young ladies, as they preferred to be called—were no great favourites with the children at The Meadows, though the latter did their best to entertain them,—especially Annie, to whose share they naturally fell. They were always very much dressed, with a great deal of fashion, and could never run nor play without fear of breaking or tearing or spoiling something, or putting their hair out of curl, or ruining their complexion. They screamed at insects and mice, and were

most inconveniently afraid of frogs, toads and snakes: every cow by the roadside was a furious bull, and every dog was either mad or spiteful. Antoinette even pretended to be afraid of Sidney's pointer Sport, and of little Bruno, the Skye terrier, who on his part hated her with a perfect hatred. They looked down on their country-cousins and in their hearts regarded them as ignorant little savages. Annie's thick shoes, calico frocks and gingham sun-bonnets were hideous in their eyes; and they wondered that any one so rich as their grandfather would allow his grandchildren to go looking so much "like district-school-children." Annie had once taken them out on one of their rambling excursions with Mr. Crediton; but their inconvenient fears, and the airs of exclusiveness they put on towards the other children, made her repent of it twenty times before they reached home; and she quietly resolved never again to expose herself to such mortification upon their account.

Besides these little incongruities, which perhaps were, after all, not very important, the Meredith girls—as Sidney impolitely

called them—had one trait of character which their cousins justly regarded as very mean. They were excessively sly. Their mother, who prided herself upon her exact and strict discipline, (as poor Daisy knew to her cost,) never allowed them to read story-books of any sort; and this rule bore particularly hard upon them at The Meadows. The children there were not, indeed, allowed to read any book without asking permission; but, as their library was kept well supplied with proper reading-matter, they did not feel the restraint as a hardship and never sought to evade it; while Antoinette, who loved stories of all sorts, was continually seeking private opportunities of gratifying her taste. Annie was much amazed, on going suddenly into their room one day, to find Antoinette so interested in a small yellow-covered pamphlet as to be almost unconscious of her presence. She looked up suddenly and made a move to hide the book behind her, but, thinking better of it, she said, carelessly, "Is it the fashion here to come in without knocking?"

Annie coloured in her turn,—not from shame, but vexation. "I did not know you

were here, Antoinette: I thought you were down-stairs with Matilda, and I came to get something out of the closet. You seem to have a very interesting book," she added, not wishing to appear annoyed. "What is it?"

"I will show you, if you will promise not to tell mamma or Matilda," replied Antoinette, mysteriously,—"if you will promise faithfully not to tell."

"Why not?" asked Annie, innocently.

"Why not, you goose? Because if Matilda knows she will be sure to tell mother, and then there will be a fuss, of course. But I don't believe you will." And she held out the book as she spoke. But Annie drew back.

"I don't like secrets, Antoinette," she said. "I never can see any use in them; and I am sure that is not a proper book, or you would not be so afraid."

"But you won't tell?" said Antoinette, in alarm, as Annie turned to leave the room. "You won't surely tell?"

"Of course not, unless I am asked. Why should I?" replied Annie, very much dis-

Daisy. "'Evil speaking, *lying* and slandering,'—and in the Bible, too. Annie copied out all the texts about it, and it does not say *wrong story* once."

"Did you ever see such a little old-fashioned thing as she is?" said Matilda, aside, to her sister.

"I don't know but she is right," replied Antoinette, who had seemed to be rather struck with her little cousin's remarks. "If it really is lying, it is well enough to call it so."

"*You* needn't set up to be virtuous, at any rate," retorted Matilda. "You are no better than I am about that, or any thing else."

Antoinette was perfectly aware of that fact, but it was a fact that might reasonably make her rather uneasy. She saw a great difference between her cousins and herself, and she had lately felt an uneasy consciousness that the superiority was not, as she had formerly imagined, entirely upon her side. But she was not inclined to confess this feeling to her sister, of all the people in the world: so she made her a sharp answer, and went away, feeling vexed with her cousin,

with Matilda and everybody else,—most of all with herself.

With so many differences of opinion and feeling, not to say principle, it may be guessed that the society of Antoinette and Matilda was no especial pleasure to the children, and they were heartily glad when their governess, Miss Taylor, came back. She was a very amiable and bright young lady, and the children were extremely fond of her: their holiday had been a long one, and they were glad to begin regular lessons again, though Antoinette and Matilda grumbled a good deal at having to study with them. Miss Taylor did not find that the presence of her new pupils at all diminished her cares, and frankly told Miss Winston that they gave her more trouble than all the rest put together. She was willing to do what she could for them, but she hoped she should not be judged by her success. Antoinette, however, really appeared to awaken after a time to the desire of improving herself. Annie noticed that she seemed inclined to be more open, and that in one or two little affairs which transpired she took pains to speak the exact truth, though it

was at the cost of some little trouble to herself. Moreover, she became more faithful in the performance of her tasks; practised her hour faithfully upon her lessons, instead of wasting it in trifling as she and Matilda had been accustomed to do unless somebody were present to watch them, and took much pains with her other lessons, especially her drawing, in which even her mother allowed that she made great improvement, adding, lest Miss Taylor should be too much elated, that it was not to be wondered at, as they had before had the best of instruction.

Meantime Richard had commenced with his pupil, Jack Short, whose improvement had been rapid enough to satisfy even himself, and quite amazed his young teacher. He found that Jack understood pretty well the first four rules of arithmetic, and had learned the tables, but not very thoroughly. He was always looking back at the multiplication-table every time he was at a loss; and Richard represented to him the propriety of learning it more perfectly. Jack demurred. He wanted to get on, he said; and what was the use of taking pains to

learn the table, so long as he had the book by him to look at?

"But you cannot always have the book by you," argued Richard. "Suppose, for instance, you were out surveying: you would not like to carry a book and be obliged to look at it every time you wanted to know how much were six times seven, or how many feet make a rod."

Finally, Jack concluded to learn the tables, and did so,—though it was hard work, as he was not accustomed to commit to memory. He conquered them, however, and found them worth the trouble they had cost him. Compound numbers were passed through easily enough; but, when they came to vulgar fractions, Jack found himself in deeper water. Perhaps the young teacher's explanations were not the clearest in the world, or possibly the book might be in fault; but certain it is that Jack grew more and more puzzled every day, and finally, one afternoon, he threw down the book with an oath, declaring that he would not touch the confounded thing again.

"It seems to me that you are the one that is confounded, and not the book," said Rich-

ard, rather slyly. "But I would not swear: it will not mend the matter; and, besides, you promised you would not do so any more."

"It's none of your business whether I swear or not," retorted Jack, his humour not being improved by being put in mind of his promise. "You are not my master, Dick Winston."

"I don't want to be your master, I am sure," replied Richard, gently, though he felt very much vexed. "You asked me to teach you, and I am very glad to do it, but not if you use such words. And I tell you plainly you shall not swear."

"Shall not! I should like to see you help yourself, and be —— to you."

"I cannot help what you do; but I can help what I do," said Richard, quietly; and, getting up from the door-step where they had been sitting, he walked towards the gate, when, turning round, he added, "Any time you are ready to begin again, I am ready; but it must be upon my own terms."

Quite beside himself with passion, Jack hurled after Richard the slate he held in his hand. Richard dodged; and the slate, narrowly missing his head, struck the gate-post

and was dashed into many pieces. Richard stopped short, looked at Jack steadily for a moment, and then departed without another word. He walked home feeling very much grieved and disappointed. He had had great hopes of Jack ever since his illness; and perhaps with other feelings was mingled some wounded pride as he thought how much he had said at home about his pupil's improvement. He had really taken a great deal of pains and practised much self-denial upon the boy's account, and now here was his reward. He felt so unhappy that on reaching a retired place in the woods, through which he usually passed, he sat down and cried,—a thing which he had not done in more than a year before. The first thing he heard on reaching the school-room was, "Where is Dick? We cannot do any thing without him. I suppose he is up at the saw-mill with his hopeful pupil, as usual." The speaker was Annie, who had never become reconciled to the idea of her brother's spending so much time with that Short boy, as she called him. Richard had not intended to mention the affair at home; but his own feelings and Annie's remarks were too

much for him, and he said, with a quivering lip, "You need not distress yourself, Annie. I shall never go there again."

"What is the matter?" asked Sidney, looking anxiously at his cousin. "I do believe—" you have been crying, he was going to say, when he remembered that perhaps Richard would not like to have it noticed; and he changed it into—"you have had some trouble with Jack. What was it?"

Richard related his story, feeling a little of the proud spirit of martyrdom as he did so. There were various opinions expressed; but all agreed in blaming Jack and applauding Richard. "It is always the way when one tries to do good to such people," said Annie: "you get nothing but abuse in return. I told you so, Dick, before you began; and I only hope you will believe me next time."

"You speak as though you were rather glad of it than otherwise, Annie," said Miss Taylor, who had been sitting in the window-recess, engaged in writing. Annie coloured. She knew that in her heart she was glad. "It is true," Miss Taylor continued, "that every one who tries to imitate the blessed

example of our divine Teacher in going about doing good must expect to meet with more or less ingratitude from the objects of his charity; but that is no reason for giving up trying. If it were, we should be badly off; for none of us but show the same spirit at times, and require the exercise of forbearance and charity not only from those around us, but from a higher power. 'God is a righteous judge, strong and patient; and God is provoked every day.'"

"Then I suppose you think it is Richard's duty to keep on going there to have slates and stones thrown at his head," said Annie, —vexed at what seemed like a reproof.

"Do you suppose so, Annie?" said Miss Taylor, looking keenly at her. Annie did not reply, and she continued:—"I think Richard should not allow himself to be too much discouraged by this explosion of passion upon Jack's part, but be ready to help him again, if opportunity offers. Neither do I think his offence an entirely unheard-of crime," she added, smiling. "I think I have heard of books being thrown across this very school-room, and not so very long ago, either."

Sidney coloured, and then laughed. "I know it, Miss Taylor. I thought of that very thing in a moment; and that was the reason I did not speak. I dare say Jack will be sorry enough when he comes to think about it, for I do believe he has been trying very hard to do right, lately."

"And it is not so easy to be good all in a minute, either," observed Antoinette, who had been an attentive listener, though she had said nothing. "It is hard to leave off doing wrong things, if one wants to leave off ever so much."

"It is as you say, my dear," replied Miss Taylor, kindly; "and we should not be discouraged or out of patience with ourselves or others, though we fail many times. And now I advise you to drop the subject for the present and go on with your plans for the evening."

The plan was to take the wagon and drive down to the village, to bring Kate up to tea, that she might hear the lecture upon dogs which was to be given them this evening. Mr. Winston had given them leave to use both the horses and to take a drive before they came home. Matilda would not go,

professing to be afraid of Richard's driving; and she did her best to persuade her mother not to give Antoinette permission; but Mr. Winston laughed so much at the idea that Richard was not a safe driver that Mrs. Meredith finally allowed her darling to run the risk. The drive was a very pleasant one; and Richard had almost forgotten his annoyance when he arrived at home.

Matilda thought an evening spent in talking about dogs must be very stupid, and made up her mind that it would not be worth her while to listen very attentively. Antoinette, on the contrary, was delighted at the idea of having some stories, for stories of all sorts were what she loved best in the world, and, as we have seen, she did not get many at home. Moreover, she had been trying hard all day to do her duty, and Miss Taylor had encouraged and commended her—which Mrs. Meredith very seldom did, having an idea that it was very bad for children to praise them: so it was with a feeling of no common satisfaction that she seated herself to listen.

"To what family does the dog belong?" asked Miss Winston.

"The canine family," replied Sidney.

"And what are the principal characteristics of this family?"

Sidney repeated them without forgetting any of them, and wrote down the dental formula without a mistake. He was begining to have a much more exact memory for such matters.

"Quite right," said Miss Winston. "The dog—the most familiar example of this large and important family—has been the companion of man from the earliest ages. In the Bible, the first mention of dogs occurs in Exodus xi. 7:—'But against the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or against beast.' In the book of Job—supposed to be one of the oldest in the Bible—dogs are mentioned as being employed to assist the herdsmen and shepherds:—'But now they who are younger than I have me in derision, whose fathers I would not have set with the dogs of my flock.' (Job xxx. 1.) Isaiah also speaks of unfaithful watchmen as 'dumb dogs, that cannot bark, lying down, loving to slumber; greedy dogs, which can never have enough.' (Isaiah lvi. 10.) That they were not held in

any high estimation among the Jews appears from many passages of Scripture. 'Am I a dog, that thou comest against me with staves?' said Goliath to David. 'Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?' said Hazael to Elisha, who was recounting to him the crimes he would be led to commit. It was forbidden by the law to bring the price of a dog into the treasury of the Lord. St. John, in the Revelation, speaking of the Holy City, says, 'without are dogs,'—drawing his illustration, no doubt, from the multitudes of unowned, half-starved dogs which infest almost all Eastern cities and are sometimes dangerous to those who go about at night."

"Are there any races of wild dogs existing now, aunt?" asked Richard.

"Yes, many which resemble the domestic dog more or less, such as the dhole of India, the dingo of Australia, and others, which we shall notice at a future time. There are also, in certain localities, races of dogs which have become wild from a state of domestication; and they are called Feral dogs. A very fine race of them exists, or did exist, in St. Domingo, which are very

large and powerful, savage in their wild state, but tolerably easily tamed and very useful as cattle-dogs. Colonel Smith saw one of these dogs in Spanish Town, Jamaica, and describes it as a very large and noble creature. 'The looks and motions of this animal,' he remarks, 'at once told of a consciousness of superiority. As he passed down the street, all the town curs slunk away. When within our lodging, the family-dog had disappeared, although he had neither growled nor barked. We were assured he followed a human track, or any scent he was laid upon, with silence and great rapidity, but, unlike the common bloodhound, when he came upon his quarry it was impossible to prevent him from attacking and seizing his victim.' There is also a fine race of Feral dogs about Mount Ida and the plains of Troy."

"Where is Mount Ida?" asked Antoinette.

"Don't interrupt, Antoinette," said her mother. "I am sure you know where Mount Ida is. You learned it in your geography long ago."

"I don't know," replied Antoinette,

rather sullenly. "I never can remember places in geography."

"Mount Ida is in Asia Minor," said Miss Winston, "near the site of the ancient and famous city of Troy. You will find both by looking down the coast of Asia Minor from the Dardanelles. These dogs band together in packs, and, though inoffensive unless attacked, are bold and prompt in avenging an insult. A couple of English midshipmen once landed at Troy, and, seeing a number of these animals at a short distance, fired at them, in spite of the remonstrances of their guides. But the dogs, instead of being alarmed, came bounding fiercely towards them; and the party had to run for their lives.

"Constantinople, Cairo in Egypt, and, in fact, almost all Eastern cities, are inhabited by crowds of homeless and masterless dogs, which take refuge in the cemeteries and ruined buildings and make night hideous with their quarrels and howlings. They subsist upon the offal thrown out into the streets, and upon the bounty of charitable Mohammedans, who are in the habit of setting out portions of food and water for

them. 'They inhabit particular districts,' says an Eastern traveller; 'and those of one quarter seldom intrude upon those of another, or, if they do, they are speedily driven back again to their own haunts.' It is a curious fact that hydrophobia is entirely unknown among them. The pariah dogs of India seem to have similar habits, but to be more affectionate in their disposition and more prone to attach themselves to particular persons. Good Bishop Heber mentions one of these animals which chose to attach itself to him in one of his long journeys, and manifested all the amiable qualities of his more civilized brethren, guarding the baggage, keeping watch at night and showing the utmost solicitude for the safety of his self-elected patron. The men of the native regiments make a curious use of the docility of their dogs. These Sepoy regiments, as they are called, are made up of men of all sorts of different tribes and castes, so that hardly any two of them can eat together, as, according to their notions, their food would be polluted by even the shadow of a companion passing over it. As their duties prevent the close supervi-

sion which this idea renders necessary, they leave the care of their dinner to their dogs, which keep off all intruders, springing into the air to drive away the vultures and butcher-birds, and are very careful to prevent their own shadow from crossing the pot."

"Well done!" said Antoinette. "I did not suppose a dog could be taught so much."

"I think we shall hear of instances of docility more curious even than this before we get through with them. Dogs may be educated to almost any extent; and, what is very singular, these acquired faculties seem to be transmitted from one generation to another. Those most skilful in such matters believe pointing game to have been the result of education originally; and yet puppies of this breed point without being taught. In certain districts of England and France dogs are educated to hunt for truffles and bring them to their masters, who make much profit in this way."

"What are truffles?" asked Daisy.

"They are a species of fungus, having a peculiar smell and a flavour much like that

of a mushroom, and are greatly valued for flavouring sauces and made-dishes. They grow entirely under ground, and therefore would be difficult to find but for the aid of these dogs, who discover them by the smell and then carefully scratch them up and carry them to their masters. They are first taught to do so by feeding them upon bread which has been kept in the same box with a truffle; and when they have thus acquired a fondness for the flavour the bread is buried, and they are easily taught to dig it up. A dried truffle is then substituted, which the dog soon discovers and carries to his master, who always rewards him with a piece of bread. Pigs are also taught to find them; but they are rather apt to devour the prize themselves, instead of carrying it to their master."

"Are they found in this country?" asked Richard.

"I believe they have been found; but, as there are several varieties, some of which are poisonous, it would be necessary to use great caution in eating them. Some dogs seem to have the instinct of watchfulness in a high degree; and this is especially the case

with the mastiff and the shepherd dog races. In the mastiff especially this is very remarkable. Any thing committed to his care is perfectly safe so long as he can defend it. He keeps vigilant watch of all strangers, accompanying their movements with jealous care, but seldom offering them any injury unless they commit some aggression. This was especially the case with Sancho, a very large mastiff who died before any of you were born."

"Grandfather showed us his grave in the orchard," said Sidney; "and we are going to make him a tombstone some day."

"Many a stately monument has been worse bestowed," replied Miss Winston, "for Sancho was a model of all dogly—and I might almost say of some human—virtue. He was a large, yellowish dog, with a black mouth, and very powerful jaws, which he seldom used offensively. His care of the place and every thing connected with it was wonderful. I remember on one occasion a stranger entered the garden and began to walk about in a way which excited Sancho's suspicions; and he soon found himself attended by the dog as by a shadow. As

Sancho seemed very good-tempered and civil, however, the man felt no fear of him, and presently took hold of some flower in order to examine it more closely. The instant he did so, Sancho seized hold of his pantaloons and held him as in a vice. It was useless to attempt to stir: if he menaced or threatened, Sancho growled; if he tried to coax him, Sancho wagged his tail, but did not let go his hold; and the man was obliged to remain a close prisoner till some one of the family saw his predicament and released him. Sancho used to take intruding pigs by the ear and lead them to the gate with exemplary gravity, where, if it was open, he would dismiss them with much politeness, and if it was shut he would hold them, in spite of their noise, till some one came.

"Sancho had a peculiar manner of testifying his respect for those he liked. Whenever he saw them coming he would seize upon a stick and run towards them, carrying it in his mouth. He would put up with a straw if he could find nothing more suitable; but the larger the stick the better; and I have seen him run with a long bean-

pole in his mouth. He once attempted to carry a ladder; but that was rather too much for him. He never forgot any one who had been kind to him, and his dislikes were equally inveterate: a person who had once treated him rudely would never be noticed by him again. He disliked cats in general, and would often kill them; but he was always on friendly relations with the family cat for the time, and would fight her battles with other dogs. The horses, however, were his most intimate friends, and he always went with the carriage."

"What was the end of him?" asked Matilda, who had been listening attentively, despite her resolution not to be interested.

"A very sad one. There was an alarm of mad dogs throughout the country, caused by a large spaniel which had run through the village foaming at the mouth and had bitten three or four people and I don't know how many dogs and cattle. It was proved that this spaniel had entered the yard and been seen with our dogs; and of course sentence was passed upon them, and our poor Sancho was shot."

"What a shame!" exclaimed several

voices; and Sidney added, "I think they might have chained him up and kept him for a few days to see. It would have been as easy to shoot him afterwards."

"And what became of the people who were bitten?" asked Matilda. "Did they run mad?"

"Not one of them," replied Miss Winston. "It turned out with them as with the man in Goldsmith's ballad:—

> 'The man recover'd of the bite;
> The dog it was that died.'

Nothing happened to any of them except a great fright. It was discovered afterwards that the spaniel was a puppy who had lost his master, and, becoming bewildered, had lost his way, and, quite beside himself with thirst and fear, had caused all the alarm and lost us our excellent house-dog.

"It is said that the instinct of guarding property which distinguishes the mastiff is sometimes exercised quite disinterestedly and for the benefit of entire strangers. A lady at Bath was surprised and somewhat alarmed at being stopped by a large mastiff,

which refused to allow her to proceed. At last she discovered the loss of her veil; and, turning back, the dog accompanied her to the place where she had dropped it, and then returned to his master. A gentleman who was once riding accompanied by his dog became very much alarmed at the singular behaviour of the latter, which refused to allow him to proceed, and by growls and menaces seemed to threaten to tear him from his horse. He became at last so frightened that he drew a pistol and shot the dog, mortally wounding but not killing him, and rode on as fast as possible. No sooner had he stopped, however, than he became aware of the loss of a bag of money which he was carrying. At once the meaning of the dog's behaviour flashed upon him: he hastily retraced his steps; and there, some distance from the scene of the tragedy, he found his money all safe, and the mastiff lying beside it! The poor wounded creature had painfully crawled back and laid himself down by the treasure, determined to guard his master's interests to the last. He was still alive, and able to express his forgiveness, as it

were, by responding affectionately to his friend's caresses; but the aim was a fatal one, and he expired in the act of licking his master's hand."

"I should not like to have been that man," observed Kate.

"No. His feelings must have been painful enough. The French smugglers have a curious and amusing mode of availing themselves of the faithfulness of their dogs and their care for their masters' interests. Valuable laces and other small articles are packed securely inside their collars and are thus safely carried into Belgium, the custom-house officers, though very strict in searching persons, never dreaming of suspecting a dog. They have also in time of war conveyed letters in the same way."

"It is curious how long dogs will remember people," remarked Annie. "Sport always seems as glad to see father as any of us, though he is so seldom at home."

"Ulysses' dog remembered him after he had been away twenty years," said Richard, who was rather fond of a classical allusion.

"He must have been an old dog," observed Miss Taylor. "I do not think dogs in these days live so long."

"Not often," replied Miss Winston. "Twelve years is an old age for a dog, —though they have been known to reach twenty and even thirty years. It is true, as Annie says, that they have very long memories; and instances have been known of their dying for joy at the return of an old friend. They are fond of displaying their gratitude, even to those who do them trifling services. At one time, while staying in the city of R——, I had to pass daily through a street in which was kept a very large and very ill-conditioned bull-dog, who was the terror of the whole neighbourhood. I am not a coward in such matters; but I confess I was rather startled one day, on passing down Spring Street, to see this dog, which was lying upon the pavement before his master's door, suddenly rise up and advance to meet me. I put on a bold face, however, as I noticed that the creature did not seem angry, and walked quietly on. As he came up, he put his great nose to my hand, in the usual style of dog-courting,

and, when we arrived opposite the gate, made me understand that he wanted to be let in. I opened the gate for him, and he disappeared; but always afterwards, whenever I encountered him, he would always turn, and walk a few yards with me, and then, making his bow, return to his master. I presume you have all heard the anecdote of the dog whose leg was set by the surgeon?"

"I haven't," said Antoinette. "Please tell it, aunt."

"A benevolent surgeon in the course of his walks found a small dog with one of his legs broken. He took it home and splintered the limb properly: the dog got well, and presently afterwards disappeared. Some months after, and when he had quite forgotten the occurrence, on opening his door the surgeon found his former patient waiting for him, accompanied by another dog suffering from the same kind of injury. He testified the greatest joy at the sight of his benefactor, and made him clearly understand that he wanted that dog's leg cured as his had been. The gentleman, greatly diverted at the new sort of practice

upon which he seemed to have entered, cared for the sufferer, whose friend visited him daily, and, when the cure was completed, took him away, after again expressing his gratitude to the doctor."

"How do you suppose the dogs made each other understand?" asked Sidney.

"That I cannot tell; but it is certain that they do communicate with each other and concert plans of action. A gentleman from Devonport once took his setter dog to some place in the environs of London, when the animal was set upon by a watch-dog and rescued with much difficulty. A few days after his return home, he was missed, as well as a large house-dog, his favourite companion and playfellow, and was not seen again for some days, when both returned tired and much bitten, but evidently in the highest spirits. About the same time came a letter from the owner of the watch-dog in London, informing the owner of the setter that his animal, in company with another, had appeared, set upon the watch-dog and killed him, after which no more was seen of them.

"It is this faculty of acting in concert

which makes the dogs of St. Bernard's Monastery so valuable," continued Miss Winston. "This hospice is situated at the summit of one of the most travelled passes of the Alps, and inhabited by a few monks, who spend their time in administering to the wants of travellers, and, in winter, in rescuing those unfortunates who are overtaken in the terrific snow-storms. In this good work they are much assisted by their great dogs, who are sent out in pairs, one bearing a lantern, the other carrying a basket with wine and provision. Thus equipped, they patrol the roads; and almost every year some lives are saved by their care. There are two races of these dogs, one closely resembling the Newfoundland, the other with close, short hair, usually grayish or lion-coloured. They are equally good-tempered, sagacious and persevering, and seem to possess social qualities which would render them ornaments to society. In this they resemble the Newfoundland,—though they seem to have more vivacity. The Newfoundland dogs excel in swimming and diving, and have saved as many lives by water as the St. Bernard have by land. A New-

foundland dog has been known to plunge into the water of his own accord to rescue a small cur, maliciously thrown in, which appeared to be in danger of drowning; and their services in case of shipwreck are well known. They are very large and handsome; and their good temper and sagacious watchfulness make them excellent playmates for children.

"In the same group Colonel Smith places the shepherd dogs, which seem to me to manifest more intelligence than any other of the race. Some of them are very handsome,—as the great Mexican sheep-dog, and that of the Pyrenees; and among the Scottish collies I have seen some of rare beauty. They learn to understand language almost as well as human beings, and obey their masters' directions in a way which is truly wonderful. One of these dogs at the word of command will single out all the sheep of a particular sort in a flock, drive them together and bring them to his master: he will drive away all intruders upon the pasture, hunt up and bring home stray sheep and lambs in the darkest night, and will even carry young lambs in his mouth if

they are unable to walk. They are apt to resent greatly any affront offered to their charge, especially in the absence of the shepherd. Colonel Smith tells of a case in which the assault was committed by a tailor's dog, 'but not unremarked by the other, who immediately seized him, and, dragging the delinquent into a puddle, while holding his ear, kept dabbing him in the mud with exemplary gravity: the cur yelled; the tailor came with his goose to the rescue, and, having flung it at the sheep-dog and missed him, stood by, not daring to fetch it back till the castigation was over and the dog had followed the flock.'

"The Esquimaux dogs, so useful to the dwellers in the Arctic Circle, are placed in the same class. They do not seem to be remarkably companionable or agreeable; but probably their social qualities might improve by cultivation. They are the most precious possession of the poor Esquimaux, whom they assist in the capture of the bear and in transporting their goods from place to place; and, in return, they are treated like members of the family. You

will find many notices of them in the voyages and travels of modern times.

"We come now to the hounds. This division includes the greyhounds,—which hunt entirely by sight,—the deer-hounds, blood-hounds and fox-hounds,—which depend upon their sharp scent,—and the spaniels, pointers and setters, with whose habits you are pretty well acquainted."

"I never could see why they should be called greyhounds," said Antoinette. "I am sure I have seen them of all colours besides gray,—even black ones."

"The name is supposed to be derived, not from their colour, but from an ancient British word, *Gresh* or *Gray*, a dog. They are very beautiful creatures, with long slender necks and heads, thin bodies, deep chests, and long slender legs. They are remarkable for their speed, and have been known to run twelve miles in eight minutes. In ancient times they were valued as insignia of rank; and certain of the dignified clergy claimed the right of appearing at particular religious services with hawk on wrist and greyhound in leash."

"Think of your father going to church in

that style, Kate," said Annie, laughing,—"though, to-be-sure, he did appear something in the same way once when Don followed him into the desk."

"Did he?" asked Matilda.

"Yes," replied Kate; "and father never knew he was there until Don began to howl along with the organ."

"I have seen dogs which went regularly to church and behaved with great propriety when there," remarked Miss Taylor. "You, Mrs. Meredith, must remember Mrs. C.'s little Bruno, who used to attend evening service almost as regularly as his mistress. I have also read of a Scotch dog, who attended at a distant church with exemplary constancy, whether the family went or not, sitting with great gravity in his master's pew, and always appearing in time,—except once, when he was detained by a freshet which had swept away a bridge on his road and forced him to make a circuit. But to return to our greyhounds."

"There are two varieties," continued Miss Winston,—"the smooth and the rough haired, both equally prized by the fanciers of these animals. The largest varieties are the

Bedouin greyhound, mentioned before, and the old Irish hound, a very noble dog, of which the breed is now nearly or quite extinct. The greyhound is not remarkable for intelligence, and is mainly used in the noble English sport of hare-coursing, where twenty or thirty gentlemen, on fine horses, with huntsmen and a pack of these fleet dogs, spend their time and risk their necks in the pursuit of a poor, little, trembling, defenceless hare. Poor puss runs and doubles, and tries all her simple arts to escape her fearful enemies,—into whose jaws she is sure to fall sooner or later,—till her poor little beating heart sometimes bursts and she drops down dead."

"A noble sport, truly!" said Richard. "Almost equal to worrying cats or pulling off the wings of flies. But go on, aunt, if you please, and tell us about bloodhounds. Are they very furious?"

"Not unless they are made so by training, I believe," replied Miss Winston; "but in this case, as in some others, the man has brutalized the beast. The British bloodhound is a large and fine-looking dog, with a grand head and a thoughtful, dignified

expression of countenance. They hunt entirely by scent, and are very persevering, though slow. They have sometimes been employed to find lost children, and more frequently as instruments in the hands of tyranny to hunt out the refuge of those unfortunates who, from political, religious or other fanaticism, have been compelled to take refuge in swamps and forests from the cruelty and oppression of their fellow-creatures. Fox-hounds, beagles and hunters are all of the same race. But we must now pass to another, as our time is nearly used up.

"The cur dogs are the last we shall notice. The term *cur* has been used as a term of reproach: it is in reality one of the oldest—if not *the* oldest—European name for the dog. In the list of cur dogs are arranged, first, the terriers,—small, compact dogs, sometimes smooth and delicate, sometimes very rough and shaggy, but always brave, sagacious and high-spirited, possessing a peculiar instinct for destroying vermin of all sorts. Secondly, the mastiff, which we have already noticed. A very fine breed of these dogs is found in Thibet, where it is much valued for its watchfulness and

faithfulness. Third, the bull-dogs, which are savage in disposition, but capable of the strongest attachment to their masters, possessed of indomitable courage and obstinacy, suffering themselves to be torn in pieces rather than relax their hold. They are chiefly used by those brutes in human shape who take pleasure in cock-fights, dog-fights and other similar amusements."

"Tell us some more stories, please, aunt," said Antoinette. "I could listen to you all night without being tired."

"But you forget that I might be tired of telling," replied Miss Winston, smiling. "I have exceeded our usual time already; and, though there are plenty more anecdotes, even more amusing than those I have given you, yet I think these must suffice for the present."

CHAPTER IX.

WILD DOGS, JACKALS, AND HYENAS.

JACK remained for some time sitting upon the step where Richard had left him, with his face hidden in his hands. He had, as it were, thrown away all his anger with the unfortunate slate; and, now that his passion was over and his lately-acquired feelings began to regain possession of him, he felt very wretched. His mind ran over the length and breadth of his acquaintance with Richard, from the adventure with the kitten until now; and he could not remember ever having received aught but good from him whom he had now narrowly escaped killing in his blind and senseless rage. The circumstances of his illness, his resolutions of reformation, his professions of gratitude to Richard, passed in review before him; and when to these was added the thought of the chance

for improvement he had so wantonly thrown away, his reflections were bitter indeed.

"It is no use trying to do any thing or be anybody," he said to himself: "every thing is against me." And then he began to consider whether any thing had been against him except his own petulance and impatience. He could not, now that he was cool, see that Richard had been in any way to blame. It was true he had positively promised never to swear again, both when he was sick and at the commencement of the lessons, when Richard had made it a condition in their agreement; and it was only kind in his friend to remind him of his promise when he saw him in danger of breaking it. He thought how he had said his prayers lately, and how he had talked to Sarah about saying her's; and what a hypocrite he seemed to himself! "And yet I did mean to be a good boy," said poor Jack; "I am sure I did."

Although the thought of his prayers seemed to give new fire to his self-reproach, it seemed, too, to bring a sort of comfort with it. Jack sat for some time longer, buried in thought; and then, hastily and

quietly rising, he went around the corner of the house and ascended to a sort of garret above the wood-house, where old planks, worn-out tools and other things little used or sought for were stowed away.

It chanced that Mr. Short had occasion to go to this garret for something a short time afterwards; and his astonishment was great when, on reaching the level of the floor, he beheld his son upon his knees in the corner. Jack started up in some confusion when he heard a step, and coloured crimson when he met his father's eye. It came to his lips at once to make a false excuse for his position; but happily the temptation was resisted, and he was silent.

"Never mind, Jack," said his father, not unkindly. "No need to be ashamed of saying your prayers. It's those that don't say 'em that have reason to be ashamed." He put his hand upon the boy's head, and added, still more gently, "I've seen lately that you've been trying to be a better boy; and, though I haven't said much, it's done my heart good. I'm not what I ought to be myself; but I've got a father's feelings for

you, sonny, and I should like first-rate to see you grow up a good man."

His father's kindness affected Jack greatly, —perhaps all the more because the expression of it, at least, was rather unusual. He burst into tears, and sobbed, "Oh, father! I'm not a good boy, and I never shall be. I thought I should be once; but——"

"But what?" asked his father, sitting down upon a box and drawing the boy to a seat by his side. "Tell me all about it."

An hour before, Jack would about as soon have thought of talking to the sawmill as to his father; but now the barrier seemed broken down that had always existed between them, and he related the whole story, not trying to excuse himself in the least, but taking all the blame to his own share. His father listened, without any remark, till he had finished.

"Well, my son," said he, at last, "I am very sorry it has happened so, for more reasons than one: first, because the boy had taken a deal of pains to be kind to you, and then because the old gentleman has done so much for me. I have never had any thing but good of the family from first

to last, and I am sorry to have any thing done that looks like being ungrateful. Just think!—if the slate had hit Dick and killed him or made him helpless for life! But don't cry any more," he added: "there is no use crying for spilt milk. I suppose you know what you've got to do next?"

"What?" asked Jack, looking rather alarmed.

"Go right off and ask Dick's forgiveness," replied Mr. Short, with emphasis. "It is the only amends you can make that I know of,—though, if any other way turns up, I hope you won't be slow to avail yourself of it. But that is a thing you can do directly,—not to-night, perhaps, but the first thing in the morning."

Jack hung his head. "I'm afraid he won't forgive me," he said; "and I am ashamed to look him in the face."

"Don't look him in the face, then," returned Mr. Short. "Beg pardon first, and look him in the face afterwards. He a'n't the boy I take him for if he don't forgive you; but whether he does or not makes no difference. Go up there the first thing after breakfast, and ask for Dick; and then say,

like a man, 'Dick, I'm sorry.' *That's* what you've got to do."

"I believe you are right, father," said Jack, raising his head and looking as if a load were taken off his mind; "and I'll do it, too!"

"There's a good fellow," returned his father, shaking hands with him. "I am glad to see you in earnest, sonny; and I tell you again that nothing does me so much good as to see you trying to do right. And, as to your schooling, don't fret too much about that. You shall go to school next winter if your mind is set on it; and you can be learning all you can in the mean time."

The next morning, as soon as he thought breakfast would be over, Jack put on his hat and marched resolutely up to The Meadows. As he passed through the gate he saw the deep dent made by the slate-frame, and shuddered at the thought it suggested; but it only gave him new resolution, and he hurried on. He rather dreaded having to go to the house and ask for Richard; and it was with a feeling of relief that, as he came near, he saw him engaged in training a clematis-vine round the window of the

little log house. But then all the other children were there, and he did not like to face them very well,—especially the girls, of whom, like most boys of his age and circumstances, he was very much afraid. However, he put a bold face upon it, and, walking resolutely up to where Richard was at work, said, though in rather an unsteady voice, "Dick, I should like to speak to you, if you please."

Richard turned, not a little astonished, and the other children exchanged glances of amazement, for Jack had never been in the habit of coming to The Meadows at any time,—which made his appearance now the more remarkable.

"Master Richard is engaged," said Annie, with her haughtiest emphasis, before her brother had time to speak for himself.

"Annie, for shame!" said Richard, in a low tone, and then, turning to Jack, asked, good-humouredly, "Is it any thing private, Jack?"

"Yes,—no:—I may as well say it before folks. I'm very sorry, Dick. I have come to ask you to forgive me, and I hope you will; though——" He stopped: his colour

grew deeper and deeper, and he bit his lip.

"Don't think any more about it," said Richard, all the small remains of his anger vanishing before Jack's voice and words. "I was to blame, too, I dare say; but, at any rate, I am sure I forgive you, Jack."

"You *are* a good fellow." Jack could say no more. He turned and was going away, but Richard and Sidney stopped him. "No, don't go so," said Sidney: "it isn't school-time yet. Stay and help us a little."

"Help us, indeed!" said Annie, not in a very low tone. "Have you taken leave of your senses, Sidney?"

"I think you have taken leave of your senses and your manners too, Annie," returned Sidney, indignantly,—and then, turning to Jack, "Will you tell us about something we want to do? We want to make a rustic seat,—something like this," (showing him a print in a book containing designs for all sorts of rustic work.)

Jack had never seen any thing of the kind before, and looked at it with great interest. "I never saw any such," he said, finally; "but I should think it would be

very pretty. I guess I could make it if I had the picture to look at. I love to tinker about such things."

"I will ask grandfather if he will lend you the book," said Richard. "There are a great many designs in it, and some of them are beautiful. And what about the lessons?" he added, drawing him aside, (for he saw that the presence of the girls embarrassed him.) "Do you want to go on?"

"If you will, Dick,—if you are not afraid, and if you are not tired of trying to teach such a blockhead."

"Oh, I am not afraid," replied Richard, smiling; "and, as to your dulness, I don't believe it is your fault. We don't get started right, somehow. I mean to ask Miss Taylor about it. I will come up to-night, then, and bring the book, if grandfather says I may."

Jack departed, with his heart much lighter than he had supposed it ever would be again, and Richard returned to his companions. He found Annie looking very angry.

"So, Richard," she commenced, "you are going to take up that wicked boy again, are you, and bring him here as a com-

panion for us, too? You can do as you please, I suppose; you always do; but you need not expect me to have any thing to say to him. I shall speak to grandfather about it," she added, growing more and more vexed as she went on, "and see whether he approves of your going on in this way."

"As to that," replied Richard, "I shall speak to him myself; and I think I know what he will say. I never said any thing about his being a companion for you; and I think you are unjust to him. If he had been so utterly bad he would never have come up here to own himself in the wrong and beg pardon before you all, especially after you spoke as you did."

"It is easy to say one has been wrong," said Annie.

"Not so easy for some folks I know," interrupted Sidney.

"But I see you are all against me," Annie continued, colouring more and more. "Kate thinks me a heathen, because I don't want my brother's life endangered by a wicked boy. I am all in the wrong, of course; I always am so in your eyes; but you need not expect me to agree to any such doings."

Annie turned and walked towards the house, leaving the party feeling very uncomfortably,—all but Matilda, who declared that she thought Annie just right and that she was glad to see her show so much spirit. Antoinette, who had lately learned to consider her cousin as a type of perfection, looked utterly amazed; and Kate, though now used to her friend's moods, was very much grieved.

"Don't speak to her just now," she said to the boys, who were going to follow her. "She will get over it much sooner if she is left to herself to think it over. I think we had better go in. I am sure it is school-time."

It proved not to be school-time by a quarter of an hour; but the children did not feel in spirit for any more play, and seated themselves quietly at their books. Annie did not appear when the bell rung, but entered a few minutes after, her eyes red with crying, and took her place in silence. At recess she withdrew entirely from the others and busied herself in putting her desk in order; and, as soon as school was out, she was about leaving the room, but Miss Taylor called her back.

"I wish to know what the matter is," she said. "Have you been quarrelling?"

"No, ma'am," replied Richard, simply.

"I don't know what you call quarrelling," retorted Matilda. "I say you boys quarrelled with Annie and treated her shamefully, all for the sake of a loafer that you had no business to speak to at all. If I were Annie I would tell grandfather."

Annie did not look very well pleased with this defence of her cousin's; while Antoinette said, sharply, as usual,—

"I do not see that it is any business of your's, Matilda."

Miss Taylor now called upon Kate for a statement of the case; and she gave it simply, without trying to favour any one. As Annie listened, she could not but allow that her friend's version was correct, and she was surprised to see how little ground she had for being so much hurt. She began to be as much mortified as she had before been vexed, and blushed scarlet when Miss Taylor said,—

"I do not see, after all, Annie, what you had to complain of."

"I haven't complained," she replied, trying to speak indifferently.

"Not in words, perhaps," Miss Taylor rejoined, "but your manner was certainly somewhat martyr-like. I advise you to let the matter drop entirely," she continued, seeing Annie about to speak, "and try to do better in future."

"I am sorry if I hurt Annie's feelings," said Richard. "I did not mean to do so, I am sure. I did not like to have her speak so to Jack, just as he was trying so hard to make amends for doing wrong, because I thought it would discourage him. He did not intend any disrespect by calling me Dick."

"Disrespect!" exclaimed Sidney: "he is ready to fall down and worship your very shadow."

Miss Taylor smiled.

"That would be a curious kind of idolatry, Sidney. I presume, as you say, that Jack has a sufficient respect for his young teacher; and I think the course he has taken shows that he has the elements of a fine character."

"It shows that he wants to get some-

thing out of Dick," said Matilda, "evidently. He thinks it is a fine thing to have his schooling for nothing."

"Even supposing your charitable conclusion to be the true one, Matilda, does it not show at least a desire of knowledge and self-improvement in him? I am inclined to think that Richard will derive benefit from these lessons as well as his pupil," she continued. "We cannot always tell exactly what we know till we try to impart our knowledge to others. You have found that out, Kate, already, have you not?"

"Yes, indeed," replied Kate, who had recently taken a class in Sunday-school. "I thought myself a pretty good Bible-scholar till I tried to explain to the children."

"I suppose, then, you would recommend young ladies to teach district school by way of completing their education?" said Matilda, scornfully.

"I should think it a very good plan, certainly, if they happened to be competent," replied Miss Taylor, smiling. "But, while we are talking, time is slipping away, and we shall have to make haste not to be late at dinner."

Richard related all the circumstances of the affair to his grandfather, and received, as he had anticipated, full permission to go on with his lessons. Mr. Winston was pleased to hear of the interest Jack had taken in the book of designs, and allowed Richard to lend it to him, saying that if Jack succeeded in manufacturing a pretty rustic seat he would employ him to make some for the garden. Richard was very much pleased; for he had conceived a great interest in his pupil and thought him very hopeful. The only thing that now grieved him was the prejudice Annie had taken up, which prevented him from deriving any advantage from her co-operation, besides giving him an uncomfortable feeling of separation from his only sister.

By night Annie seemed to have recovered her serenity, though, true to her character, she made not a word of acknowledgment, nor did she intimate that she thought she had been in the wrong,—thus making good Sidney's assertion "that it was not easy for some folks to own themselves in the wrong." She took no notice of her brother's absence in the afternoon;

and when he announced on his return that Jack had mastered the difficult rule, she took pains to show by her manner that she considered it a matter of the least possible consequence.

"What are we going to talk about this evening?" asked Sidney, as they took their places for the evening's lecture.

"The next on our list, properly speaking, are the different races of what are commonly called wild dogs," replied Miss Winston; "but, as little comparatively is known of them, we shall pass over them rapidly and come to the jackals, foxes and hyenas, which last form the concluding group in the canine family. Of the wild dogs there seem to be many varieties, all bearing a small resemblance to each other, and readily referable to the same class of animals. They are all reddish in colour, which occasions them to be classed together under the general name of red dogs; they want the second cheek-tooth in the lower jaw, the soles of their feet are hairy, and the eyes placed more or less obliquely, with round pupils. They do not burrow, but live very retired in jungles and forests, and

assemble together for purposes of assistance and defence, each one being ready to do battle for his comrades. They have a barking note, and hunt together by day and by night, attacking not only the more timid animals, such as the deer and antelope, but the wild boar, the buffalo, and the tiger himself. Indeed, the latter seems to be the object of their especial aversion: they destroy the cubs whenever they can find them; and the tiger has such a dread of them that he is often alarmed even at the sight of a tame spaniel. They are ordinarily inoffensive to man, if unmolested; but it is almost impossible to tame them, even if taken quite young,—though in one or two instances the experiment has partially succeeded, and in those cases they have appeared quite as intelligent as the tame dogs with which they have been compared. There are several varieties of the animal in India. They extend from China to the borders of Persia, and are found in some places in considerable numbers; but they are so shy, and at the same time so fierce, that little is known of them except their names. A very dangerous

animal of this kind sometimes follows the caravans from Bassora to Aleppo. The Arabs call it Shab, and stand in great fear of it, asserting that its bite is invariably fatal. Authors have attempted to account for this fact by supposing the creatures to be mad; but, as animals in a state of hydrophobia are never known to associate together, this does not seem a very probable solution. The bite of all the wild canines is very severe and dangerous, owing to their great strength, the sharpness of their teeth and the pertinacity with which they retain their hold."

"All dogs are dangerous," pronounced Matilda, half aside, to Sidney, who was playing with little Bruno's ears. "You never know when they will get mad."

"That is the case with some other things besides dogs," replied Sidney, mischievously. Matilda turned to her work again with the air of injured innocence which she always assumed when any of her speeches were repaid in kind.

"There are several races of wild dogs inhabiting the islands of the Indian Ocean," continued Miss Louisa,—"one of which

seems to be very little larger than a large cat. Africa has also its wild dog, which commits great ravages among the sheep. The dingo of Australia has become better known than any of the others. Like the wild dog of Africa, it is very destructive to sheep, and destroys many hundreds of them, seemingly in mere wantonness, as it always kills many more than it can possibly eat. They hunt not in such large packs as the dholes of India, but in pairs, or in companies of five or six. Probably the parents and their offspring keep together, as we have seen in the case of the wolves. Accounts differ as to their courage. Mr. Howitt, who spent much time in Australia, seems to consider them cowardly animals; while Colonel Smith speaks of them as being both brave and fierce, and mentions one kept at Paris, in the Jardin des Plantes, which would always fly fiercely at a cage containing a panther or a bear. Mr. Oxley, Surveyor-General of New South Wales, tells an anecdote which seems to show that these poor animals possess the strongest feeling of mutual attachment. He says in his journal, 'About two weeks ago we killed a

native dog and threw his body upon a small bush. On returning past the same spot to-day, we found the body removed three or four yards from the bush, and the female, in a dying state, lying beside it: she had apparently been there from the day the dog was killed, being so weakened and emaciated as to be unable to move at our approach. It was deemed mercy to despatch her.' "

"Poor thing!" said Antoinette. "I should think they would have tried to feed her and bring her to life."

"She might have been too far gone," observed Richard; "or she may have refused to eat: most likely she would, as she had starved herself of her own accord to watch her companion. I think, as the man says, it was a mercy to kill her,—though I should not have liked to be the one to do it."

"How wonderfully sentimental!" said Matilda, with her usual sneer. Daisy looked indignantly at her, but Richard only smiled: he had learned to care very little for Miss Meredith's speeches. "Are there any wild dogs in America?" he asked. "I do not remember to have heard of any."

"None in North America,—unless we con-

sider, as some authors do, the prairie-wolves and the Mexican coyotte as representatives of the family; and they seem to me too decidedly wolfish in their aspect to be considered as any thing but wolves. In South America their place is occupied by the hyena wolves, which seem to be intermediate between the red dog group and the hyena. In their habits they seem to resemble jackals rather than dogs, though they are much more gentle in their dispositions, and may be trained so as to accompany their master in the chase; but, should the game be scarce or not to their liking, they will leave him and return home. Both tame and wild ones have a crow-like propensity to steal and hide things which can be of no manner of use to them, such as canes, silk handkerchiefs, and bright-coloured articles in general. In a wild state they seem to be dumb, but, when tamed, learn to bark feebly and, as it were, imperfectly. They subsist, like other canines, upon flesh, but devour also fish, crabs, toads, serpents and insects. When domesticated, they will join in the jaguar-hunt with great eagerness, but do not seem to have that in-

nate hostility towards him which the canines of the Old World show towards the tiger.

"We next come to the jackals, so well known to all travellers in the East and to all readers of their books. The jackals are a group of nocturnal or crepuscular animals."

"What is the meaning of crepuscular?" asked Daisy.

"It means twilight, and is a word applied to such animals as rove abroad and seek their prey by twilight, either of morning or evening. Thus, some moths are called crepuscular, because they never fly during daylight or after dark. The jackal comes abroad just about the dusk of the evening and continues hunting the whole night, devouring every thing that comes in his way, entering towns and villages to feast upon the offal thrown into the streets, robbing hen-roosts and ill-secured storehouses, digging up graves that are not well guarded, and entering the vineyards to feast upon the grapes as soon as they begin to ripen. But their voices cause much more annoyance to those in their neighbourbood even than their thievish habits. It is a melan-

choly sound, ranging in character from a single sharp yelp to a shrill prolonged cry, repeated in every variety of pitch, and mingled with short dismal moans and whinings as of a person in the utmost distress. They are never silent an instant from sunset to sunrise; and, as there are often more than two hundred in one pack, the uproar may be more easily imagined than described. Sometimes a single jackal may be heard to utter a sharp warning cry, which is not repeated by the others: this is an unerring signal that a tiger is in the neighbourhood. The watchmen of a gentleman residing at Cawnpore were once attracted by this cry, and, creeping cautiously along, under the wall of the compound or court, towards the spot whence the cry proceeded, they peeped over, but beat a hasty retreat upon finding themselves face to face with an enormous tiger, who was standing with one paw uplifted, evidently in an attitude of great attention. They got off safely, and heard no more of him; but the next morning his tracks were plainly to be seen. The jackal spends the day concealed among rocks and thick jungly coverts, or in burrows, which are

inhabited by large communities together. The hyena and the Indian wolf are their occasional guests; and they seem to live in great harmony. When one jackal is attacked, the others if possible assist him. If brought to bay, they fight desperately; and their bite is very severe. When fairly overpowered, they pretend to be dead; and then nothing will make them move except throwing them into the water, when they recover their senses and attempt to swim. The jackal may be tamed, and will follow his master and show considerable affection for him, but never becomes very tractable; and he has besides, like the wolf, a very offensive smell, even when fed wholly upon vegetable diet. This was not the case, however, with a specimen which was brought from Madras by Mr. Bennett. It was at first very wild and fierce, but became perfectly tame, and manifested its affection for its master in the same manner as a dog, by wagging its tail, frisking, whining and licking the hand. It recognised Mr. Bennett by his voice after a long absence, and manifested the greatest joy at meeting him."

"How large is the jackal?" asked Annie.

"They are generally about fifteen inches high at the shoulder, but are somewhat long in proportion. They have a long pointed muzzle, furnished with whiskers, small eyes, large ears, and a moderately long tail, covered with hairs, like that of the fox. They are light and active, and quite swift of foot. Their colours are different shades of reddish and buff, mixed with grizzled white or buff hairs."

"Now for foxes!" said Richard. "They are classical animals, as well as dogs and wolves."

"Yes: they have been celebrated in song and story since the days of Esop," said Miss Winston. "They are frequently mentioned in Holy Scripture, and once in a way which puts us in mind of the fox who philosophized about the inaccessible grapes. The passage occurs in Canticles ii. 15:—'Take us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the grapes, for our vines have tender grapes.'"

"I remember that now," said Annie; "but I have always thought that the fondness of the fox for the grapes was a flight of fancy on the part of Esop."

"By no means," replied Miss Winston.

"Foxes in the East Indies are particularly fond of grapes, and, like the jackals, do much damage in the vineyards. Authors attribute the same taste to the common fox."

"They call some kinds of wild grapes fox-grapes," said Sidney; "but I do not know whether it is because foxes eat them."

"Nor I; but perhaps it may be. The fox is the smallest of the canines, except the fenner and yuda of Africa. He is low in proportion to his length, having a sharp and long nose and a particular expression of intelligence or rather cunning. His neck is rather short, his limbs slender, and his tail, which is long in proportion to his body, is well covered with long hairs, which form a round bunch. The tail of a fox is usually called his brush. They have a fine thick and glossy fur, and, like the wolves, leave a strong odour behind them: they burrow in the ground, and never willingly come forth except at night. But the principal feature which distinguishes them from the dog is the pupil of the eye, which, when turned towards a strong light, contracts vertically, like a cat's, instead of being round like a dog's."

"What is vertically?" asked Daisy.

"Vertically means straight up and down: the side of the window is vertical to the sill, but the sill is horizontal."

"Little girls should not interrupt or even ask questions," said Matilda.

"When little girls are at their lessons, or when any one is talking to them especially," observed Miss Winston, "they should ask the meaning of words which they do not understand, as Daisy did just now; but I agree with you, Matilda, that it is impertinent for little girls or large girls to interrupt their elders when engaged in conversation, —as much so as for them to assume an authority over their companions which does not belong to them."

Matilda coloured, and for once was silenced.

"Is the fox really as cunning as he has the credit of being?" asked Miss Taylor.

"They are very sly and cautious," said Miss Winston, "and practice many stratagems whereby to save their lives and ensnare their prey. Their senses are extremely acute,—especially those of seeing and hearing. Though generally shy, and never

facing an enemy if they can help it, they have both courage and fortitude, and, when caught in a trap by the paw, have been known to gnaw the member off rather than be taken. They subsist upon birds and game of all sorts, eggs, rats and mice, and almost any thing of an animal kind, and, as we have seen, they will also eat fruit; but their favourite food is poultry, and they will run almost any risk to obtain it. It is a little singular, but quite consistent with their character, that in captivity they will hardly ever touch poultry, even when it comes in their way."

"I had a tame fox once," said Sidney, "but he got away after a while. I think they are apt to get away."

"Yes: they are impatient of captivity and are always trying to escape. They are playful when young, and have many curious ways. They breed only once in the year, and have five or six cubs, which they nourish with the greatest affection: a female fox has even been known to steal a puppy and bring it up as her own. They have more intonations of voice than almost any other animal,—yelping and barking, mur-

muring when pleased, and sometimes screaming like a peacock. The general colour inclines to red; but there are gray, black and white varieties. There is a great resemblance among the different species, which makes it very difficult to classify them accurately. The Arctic fox, like many other Northern animals, is pure white in winter, turns speckled as warm weather approaches, and during the short summer is brown, gray or bluish. It is caught in traps and used for food, but his flesh is not very agreeable. They are more social than other foxes, and are known to make large burrows, deep and warmly lined with moss, in which twenty cubs are sometimes found together. They are not so distrustful as the red fox, but are very sagacious, and excellent swimmers.

"The common red fox is found abundantly both in Europe and America. It is about two feet nine inches long, one foot three inches in height, and the tail is one foot three inches. They are reddish or yellowish in colour, with white cheeks, lips and throat. The breast and belly are usually white, and the tip of the tail almost

invariably white. For some unknown reason, the fox is apt to pull out this white tip. Like the other foxes, they are patient and cunning, and show an extraordinary degree of sagacity in escaping from their enemies. They are very destructive to game and poultry, and in this country are destroyed without mercy. In England they are hunted by dogs and men on horseback. The fox-chase is considered one of the most exciting of British sports; and large packs of hounds and stables of fine horses are kept up at an immense expense for this purpose. Sometimes lives are lost and many valuable horses are killed or ruined in these exercises. The poor fox, upon his part, has every thing to contend with. Sometimes he makes his escape in spite of all; and it is said that the foxes of England, from being so frequently hunted, become wonderfully sagacious. A story is told of one near Reading which had been partly tamed and taught to turn a spit by means of a wheel. As usual, he escaped after a time, and resumed his wild habits; but one day, being hard pressed by the hounds, and seeing the door of his old kitchen open, he sprang in, took his place

at the wheel and began turning it with all his might. The stratagem was successful, and he escaped the dogs. Another one sprang into a window and took refuge under the chair of a gentleman, who was so much pleased with the mark of confidence that he would not allow his guest to be disturbed.

"The black fox of Northern Asia and the silver fox of America are very much valued for their fur. That of the first-mentioned is entirely deep glossy black, while that of the latter has a silvery grizzle upon the forehead and flanks, and occasionally there is a white spot upon the heart. They are extremely rare.

"The dog-foxes, and the fennecs or yerdas, more properly come in between the jackals and the true foxes; and the former may be considered as jackals with long tails, or foxes with diurnal eyes. The dog-fox is, generally speaking, no larger than the true fox; they possess the same brush tail and the same offensive odour; like the jackals, they hunt in packs and form common burrows; they feed upon birds and birds' eggs, and store up the residue of their food by

burying it. They are very cunning and are seldom taken. The corresponding group in the New World are the hyena foxes, inhabiting South America, of which very little seems to be known.

"Last of all the foxes comes the fennec or yerda, which is the very smallest of the canines, the fennec of Bruce being only about sixteen inches long, and a foot high at the shoulder. The head is only about three and a half inches long,—which is just the length of the ears: consequently the latter look disproportionably large when compared with the size of the body. The ears are very wide and open, slightly pointed, and covered on the outside with cream-coloured fur. The inside of the ear is naked, except a border of white fur, and is of a pinkish colour. The rest of the body resembles that of a fox, and is covered with cream-coloured fur. The soles of the feet are covered with woolly hair, which renders the animal's step quite noiseless. The Caama fennec is a little larger and has gray fur. It watches birds and preys upon the eggs of such as lay upon the ground, thus occasioning much trouble to the poor ostriches,

which keep a constant look-out for it as soon as the laying-season commences. When it finds an ostrich-egg which it is unable to open, it rolls the egg along the ground till it encounters a stone large enough to break it. Bruce says they climb trees,—which seems to be a mistake on his part, as they are entirely unadapted to any such purpose. He kept one in a cage a long time, and states that its principal food was dates and sweet fruits, though it never refused eggs, and took great pleasure in watching birds. It was much alarmed at the approach of the cat, and tried to hide itself, but made no attempt at self-defence. It was very impatient of confinement, and constantly endeavoured to escape; and its teeth were so sharp that it was very difficult to keep it in any cage. It seems to be a pretty and cleanly little animal; and its face has an expression of much intelligence and penetration.

"We now come to the hyena, which is one of the ugliest and most repulsive in his appearance of any of the carnivora; and it seems, from the accounts of those who have had a familiar acquaintance with him, that his

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habits do not misrepresent his exterior. He has a large and clumsy head, set on a stiff, short neck; his body is high before and low behind, and his hair, when he has any, is stiff and coarse, with a bristly mane running along the ridge of the backbone; a short stiff tail and an awkward gait. Add to these characteristics his malignant blue eyes, with their pupils elliptical above and round below, and gleaming in the dark like sulphur-flames, his unspeakably filthy habits and his horrible voice, and you have the picture of as hateful an animal as can well be imagined."

"I should think as much!" said Sidney.

"And yet," observed Annie, "I saw one that did seem at least to be good-natured. Don't you remember, Richard?—the one that fed the bear?"

"What was that?" asked Miss Winston.

"It was while you were gone to New York last summer," replied Annie. "Grandfather took us all to the menagerie at the village, in which was a cage containing two leopards, a bear and two hyenas. They all seemed on good terms enough; but the bear, who was chained up at the back of the

cage, had formed a wonderful friendship with one of the hyenas. A good many cakes were thrown to them by the people, of which the bear hardly got his share; but we noticed that whenever the hyena secured a cake he always broke it in two and gave half to his friend. We saw him do it a number of times; and, though he certainly was not pretty to look at, I took quite a liking to him."

"They have several times been tamed so as to take pleasure in their master's caresses and evince much joy at his presence," remarked Miss Louisa; "and, indeed, they do not generally attack man from choice, though they do not hesitate to do it in self-defence, even when the man is mounted and well armed. They devour every thing that comes in their way, whether fresh or putrid; and, like the wolf and jackal, they are especially prone to wander in burial-places and dig up the dead. Various wonders used to be related of them in the days of antiquity,—as that they could change their form and colour at will and that they possessed the power of imitating the human voice. It was said that the hyena used to

listen about the shepherds' huts till it knew their names, and then, going in the night to their doors, it would call them out and devour them. They were reported to have but one bone in the neck, and to have their jaws filled with one continued tooth. A certain race of African smiths and iron-workers are still believed to have the power of changing themselves into hyenas at pleasure, and of performing in that shape all the wonders attributed in Europe to the wehr-wolf!"

"How curious such superstitions are!" remarked Antoinette. "I love to hear about them."

"Yes: they are indeed very singular and interesting; and you will find, upon examination, that there is almost always something to make them of. Thus the stories about the hyena may be accounted for,—the imitation of the human voice by the strange and unearthly sounds it produces, which would sometimes make one think it was trying to speak; the one immense tooth seemed to account for its enormous power of breaking and crushing the largest and hardest bones; and, as in these violent efforts

the bones of the neck are often injured and grow together, the story arose that the hyena had but one bone in its neck."

"And about its changing its colours?" asked Annie. "What should that arise from?"

"There is actually a wild canine in Africa, allied both to the dhole and the hyena, in which not only is there a great difference in different individuals, but the same individual differs greatly in his colours at different times of the year. This is the lycaon of ancient and modern authors, and the wilde honde of the Dutch colonists. The Cape variety—lycaon venaticus—is equal in stature to a tall greyhound, and stands very high on his legs. His head is broad and flat, with a blunt nose and very large ears; the neck, straight and stiff, resembles the hyena's, and, like his, is furnished with a mane of stiff hairs. The colour is generally yellowish, with white spots and black bands curiously dispersed and differing in almost every individual. Lycaons associate in packs and commit great depredations upon sheep: they seldom attack larger cattle, and when they do they invariably bite

off their tails. It would seem, from some of Bruce's anecdotes, that the hyena has the same curious habits. Attempts have repeatedly been made to tame the lycaon, but without success. The Scotch traveller Bruce, who discovered the fountains of the Nile, and who resided a long time in Abyssinia, tells many stories of these animals. I will read you his account. He says,—

"'I do not think there is any that hath hitherto written of these animals who ever saw the thousandth part of them that I have. They were a plague in Abyssinia in every situation, both in the city and the field, and, I think, surpassed the sheep in number. Gondar was full of them from the time it turned dark till the dawn of day, seeking the different pieces of slaughtered carcasses, which this cruel and unclean people expose in the streets without burial, and who firmly believe that these animals are Talassa from the neighbouring mountains, transformed by magic and come down to eat human flesh in the dark with safety. Many a time in the night, when the king hath kept me late at the palace, and it was not my duty to lie there, in going across the

square from the king's house, not many hundred yards distant, have I been apprehensive that they would bite me in the leg. They growled in great numbers about me, though I was surrounded by several armed men, who seldom passed a night without slaughtering several of them.

"'One night at Maitcha, being very intent upon observations, I heard something pass behind me towards the bed, but, on looking round, could perceive nothing. Having finished what I was then about, I went out of my tent, intending directly to return, which I immediately did,—when I observed large blue eyes glaring at me in the dark. I called upon my servant for a light; and there was the hyena standing near the head of the bed, with two or three large bunches of candles in his mouth. To have fired at him, I was in danger of breaking up my quadrant or other furniture; and he seemed, by holding the candles steady in his mouth, to wish for no other prey at that time. As his mouth was full and he had no claws to tear with, I was not afraid of him, but with a pike struck him as near the heart as I could judge. It was not till then

that he showed any signs of fierceness, but upon feeling the wound he let drop the candles and endeavoured to run up the shaft of the pike to arrive at me, so that in self-defence I was obliged to draw out a pistol and shoot him; and nearly at the same time my servant cleft his head with a little axe. In a word, the hyena was the plague of our lives, the terror of our nightly walks, the destruction of our mules and asses, which above all are his favourite food.'

"The hyena, like the jackal, feeds upon the food left by the lion, as he does upon any carrion whatever; and in this way has probably arisen the story of his being (as well as the jackal) the lion's provider. It is said that the lion punishes very severely any interference of the hyena with his game, even biting off the feet of the miserable animal and leaving it to a lingering death. Dr. Livingstone witnessed an instance of this kind."

"How many varieties of the hyena are there?" asked Annie. "I do not remember to have seen any but the spotted and striped."

"There is also the naked hyena, which

has no hair except that of the mane on his back. It is a small animal, and the skin is of a purplish colour. There is also the brown hyena, and the stained hyena, of which the colours are pale yellowish brown with black spots and stripes. It is smaller than the other varieties, but is exceedingly destructive to sheep. Like the other hyenas, it is most active at night, and rejoices in rainy and stormy weather. A small hyena, not larger than a fox, has been shot in Caffraria, but very little is known of its habits.

"At present the race of hyenas is confined to the warm regions in or near the tropics; but geology shows us clearly that there was a time when these animals were spread over nearly the whole earth. The remains of great animals of the cat kind and of bears are also found; but they are very few in number compared to those of hyenas. They were the companions of the great mastodons, elephants, tapirs, and other immense quadrupeds which roamed over the earth at that period, and the bones of which bear the marks of their powerful teeth. Great numbers of hyenas' bones are found in England."

"And so ends our course upon dogs," observed Richard, as Miss Winston concluded. "After all, aunt, taking out the domestic dogs, I do not see that the canines are any better than the felines."

"You must admit that to be a large 'take out,'" replied Miss Winston, smiling. "But omitting, as you say, the domestic dogs, I do not think the wild canine races compare in beauty or sagacity with the feline. Their fur is generally coarse and harsh, their figures in most cases far from beautiful; and their habit of devouring carrion, and the horrible odour which belongs to most of them, conspire to render them particularly repulsive. Nor do they appear to have the advantage of the cats in disposition and temper. The great Felidæ seldom kill more than they wish to eat at once; and as they are for the most part very cleanly in their manner of feeding, and, unless forced by hunger, do not usually devour putrid substances, they have no object in a wholesale destruction; while the wolf, the wild dog, and the hyena seem alike to rejoice in slaughter for its own sake, and, if they fall upon a flock of sheep or

other defenceless creatures, destroy many more than they can either eat or conceal. We may perhaps set off against this circumstance that most of the canines are more or less social, and some of the most repulsive of them are very ready to fight each others' battles and will rescue a captured companion at the risk of their own lives."

"Do you really think, Aunt Louisa," said Antoinette, "that dogs have done more good than harm?"

"What harm have they done?" asked Annie.

"I presume Antoinette is thinking of that dreadful disease, hydrophobia," said Miss Winston. "It is indeed a horrible malady; but it is comparatively rare. I suppose the race of St. Bernard dogs alone have saved more lives than ever were lost by hydrophobia; and when you add the Newfoundland dogs and consider the services of the shepherd dogs and the great watch-dogs, not to mention the different races of hunters, I think the good decidedly overbalances the evil."

CHAPTER X.

THE BEARS.

"THIS will be almost the last lecture," said Sidney, soberly, as they seated themselves after tea in the usual order.

"Quite the last, won't it?" asked Antoinette.

"No; or, at least, I hope not. We shall not go to school till a week from to-day; and Aunt Louisa says she hopes she will find time for at least one more. Oh, dear!" (and Sidney drew a deep sigh:) "I wish we were not going, or else that we could go and stay too."

"But I thought you wanted to go?" remarked Antoinette.

"Of course he wants to go!" said Matilda. "You don't suppose that he and Richard are always going to be tied up with a parcel of girls, do you?"

"I don't know what you mean by being tied up, Matilda," said Annie, with spirit. "I am sure they are not confined to the society of girls any more than they want to be; and I don't believe they consider us such terrible bores as you seem to imagine."

"To-be-sure," said Matilda, "you are more like boys than girls,—in some things, I mean," she hastened to add, seeing that Annie's colour rose and even Kate looked a little offended. "I didn't mean to affront you, Annie: so you need not look so disturbed. But I never saw any girls before who ran races, and took long walks in all sorts of places, and whittled and did all such things, and that liked it, too. And that is what I mean by saying that you are more like boys than girls."

"Well," said Kate, "and what harm is it if we do? I am sure we know how to do other things. Annie can sew better than you or Antoinette, and she is not behind you in her lessons; and I am sure she is a great deal stronger and healthier."

"And twenty times more agreeable," said Sidney to himself. But he added, aloud,

"Confess now, Matilda, don't you think it is very good fun to take walks and run races and so on?—better fun than it is to sit still in the house all day and only take a stiff walk in the street, just for exercise?"

"I didn't at first," said Matilda. "I thought it was awfully stupid living in the country, and used to wish myself back twenty times a day. But now I like it better; though, to tell you the truth, Sidney, taking the year round, I shall always like the city best."

"I don't," said Antoinette. "I should like to stay here forever."

"Forever is a long day," remarked Kate, smiling.

"You had better tell mother so when she comes back, and get her to leave you," said Matilda, tossing her head in her usual fashion. "I dare say she would be willing to do so if she knew how much you prefer any society to her's. I am sure we could do without you at home well enough."

Six weeks before, this not very kind speech would have brought on a snip-snapping contest between the sisters an hour long; but Antoinette, with all her other

acquirements, was learning forbearance, and, though she looked hurt, she held her peace. Matilda would have gone on to provoke her still further, but was happily diverted by the appearance of Richard, who came in carrying something very carefully in both hands.

"What in the world have you got there?" asked Annie.

Richard set his burden down and uncovered it. It proved to be a small work-table, with a drawer and lid, made of black walnut and beautifully polished. It was fitted with a lock and key; and on the top of the lid was an L inlaid in curled maple and surrounded with a pretty and ingenious border of the same. It was really a very elegant and tasteful affair.

"Where is Aunt Louisa?" said Richard, as the children crowded around: "it is her property. Aunt Louisa, here is a present a young gentleman sent you."

"A present for me?" said Miss Winston, wonderingly; "and from a young gentleman? What a beautiful work-table!" she continued, as she examined it. "It is just what I have always been wanting; but I

cannot imagine who can have sent it. Are you sure it is for me?"

"The gentleman gave it to me for you," said Richard; "and, besides, there is your letter on the top. He brought it himself as far as the gate; but I could not persuade him to come in. He said he was afraid."

"I know!" exclaimed Sidney, triumphantly. "I know who made it!—the one that cut out your winders, aunt, and built our rustic seat,—Jack Short."

"Pshaw!" said Matilda: "no wonder we could not guess when Dick called him a gentleman. *Gentleman*, indeed!" She looked at Annie as she spoke; but Annie was looking another way.

"You do not mean to say that Jack made this beautiful table?" said Miss Winston.

"Yes, ma'am, and he made it for you. He has been busy about it ever since he got well, and only finished it day before yesterday. He was afraid after it was done that it was not good enough; but I told him you would be delighted with it."

"Indeed I am, and still more at receiving it from him. You may tell him that I shall

value it very much, and that it is just what I have been needing for some time."

"I suppose he will expect to be paid for it," said Annie, abruptly.

"I do not suppose so at all," said Richard. "He made it for a present, and would be very much hurt if you were to offer him money for it. He feels as though Aunt Louisa almost saved his life when he was sick, and he wanted to do something to show his gratitude. He has taken a great deal of pains with this; and I think it shows great ingenuity and perseverance."

"And something better than ingenuity," added Sidney.

"You boys think every thing your friend does is quite perfect," said Matilda. "It is pretty enough, considering; but I have seen a great deal handsomer in the shops."

"I don't consider Jack perfect by any means," replied Richard; "but I think he tries to improve, and is improving very fast. And as to seeing prettier things in the shops, I am sure I have seen much handsomer collars and things in the shops than

The White Bear.

the things you and Annie make; and yet they are very pretty notwithstanding."

"Considering,"—added Sidney, mischievously.

"Well, well," said Annie, with some little impatience, "I think we may let the subject drop. It is certainly a very pretty table; and it shows a very proper spirit in Jack to make it; and I dare say he will grow to be a very good boy in time. I am sure I hope so. But I think we have heard enough about him for the present. Suppose we begin with our bears, if aunt is ready?"

Even this somewhat ungracious speech gave Richard pleasure, for he thought it showed that Annie was growing rather ashamed of her prejudice against Jack. He wheeled the work-table into a corner which was henceforth to be its place, and, setting a chair for his aunt, settled himself on an ottoman by Annie's side and prepared himself to listen.

"The bears," said Miss Winston, "may be considered as the representative class of the plantigrade carnivora. As we have not had this term 'plantigrade' before, we

will enter into a little explanation of it in this place. Plantigrade animals are those which use the entire foot in walking,—such as man, the monkeys, and the bears. The digitigrade, on the contrary, use only the toes,—as the cats and dogs, the deer and many ruminants. The plantigrade animals, take them as a class, do not compare with the digitigrade for speed,—though some of them are excellent climbers.

"The bear is very generally distributed over the globe, from the North Pole to the Tropic of Capricorn. Wherever found, he is an object of more or less veneration to the native inhabitants, both from his great usefulness and from the superstitions that attach themselves to him. This is more especially the case in the Northern regions, where the bear is almost the only large land-animal. In the case of the Laplanders, the skin of the bear forms their beds and their coverlets, bonnets for their heads, gloves for their hands and collars for their dogs, while an over-all made of it and drawn over their boots prevents them from slipping upon the ice. The flesh and fat are their dainties; of the intestines they

make masks or covers for their faces to protect them from the glare of the sun in spring, and use them as a substitute for glass by extending them over their windows. Even the shoulder-blades are said to be put in requisition for cutting grass. To the Esquimaux the white bear is no less useful. They consider his flesh the most nourishing of all possible diet; and Dr. Kane found this idea to be correct. Their dogs pursue him with the greatest perseverance and energy, and, if they flag in the course of a day's journey, the cry of 'Nannook! Nannook!' ('Bear! Bear!') is sufficient to rouse them to the top of their speed.

"By the Laplanders the bear is called 'the dog of God;' and, according to one of their proverbs, it has the strength of ten men and the sense of twelve. They never—says a Northern writer—call it by its proper name, for fear of offending it, but always speak of it as 'the old man in the fur cloak.'"

"What is its proper name?" asked Annie.

"I cannot pretend to pronounce it," replied Miss Winston, smiling; "but I will spell it for you. It is Gwouyhya."

"I don't wonder they never call him by it," said Sidney, after making several attempts to pronounce the word. "But I think, notwithstanding their opinion of the old gentleman's sense, it shows rather a weakness in him to be ashamed of his own name."

"However that may be," said Miss Winston, "they are careful never to wound his sensibilities by applying it to him, lest he should take vengeance for the affront upon their flocks. But their consideration for his feelings does not prevent them from killing him whenever they can and eating him afterwards. In the city of Berne in Switzerland, which derives its name from the bear, a number of these animals are kept at the public expense; and several noble families of the North of Europe carry the bear in their coats of arms."

"But the North American Indians perhaps excel all others in the great respect they show to the bear. One author, after giving an account of the way in which one of these animals was killed, by cutting down a hollow tree in which it had taken refuge for the winter, goes on to say, 'The bear

being dead, all my assistants approached; and all—but particularly my old mother, as I was wont to call her—took the head in their hands, stroking and kissing it several times, begging a thousand pardons for taking away her life, calling her their relation and grandmother, and requesting her not to lay the fault upon them, since it was truly an Englishman who put her to death. This ceremony was not of long duration; and, if it was I that killed their grandmother, they were not themselves behindhand in what remained to be performed. The skin being taken off, we found the fat in several places six inches deep. This, being divided into two parts, loaded two persons; and the flesh was as much as four persons could carry. In all, the carcass must have exceeded five hundredweight. As soon as we reached the lodge, the bear's head was adorned with all the trinkets in possession of the family, such as silver armbands and wristbands and belts of wampum, and then laid upon a scaffold set up for its reception within the lodge. Near the nose was placed a quantity of tobacco. The next morning no sooner appeared than prepara-

tions were made for a feast. The lodge was cleaned and swept, the head lifted up, and a new blanket, which had never been used before, spread under it. The pipes were lighted, and Watawam blew tobacco-smoke into the nostrils of the bear, telling me to do the same and thus appease the anger of the bear on account of my having killed her. I tried to persuade my benefactor and friendly adviser that she no longer had any life, and assured him that I was under no apprehensions from her displeasure. But the first proposition gained no credit, and the last gave but little satisfaction. At last, the feast being ready, Watawam made a speech, resembling in many things his address to the manes of his relations and departed companions, but having this peculiarity,—that he deplored the necessity which men laboured under to destroy their friends. He represented, however, that the misfortune was unavoidable, since without doing so they could by no means subsist. The speech being ended, we all ate heartily of the bear's flesh; and even the head, after remaining for three

days on the scaffold, was taken down and put into the soup-kettle.'

"The bear is also much respected in the East Indies and considered as being possessed of certain supernatural powers. A story is related of an English officer who, passing with his palanquin through a forest, was attacked by a bear and left to his fate by his attendants, who stood looking on, exclaiming, alternately, 'Well done, master! well done, bear!' as one or the other appeared likely to have the advantage, and, when the conflict was ended by the death of the bear, approached in a body to congratulate the Sahib on his victory."

"Well, bears are curious creatures," said Sidney; "and I do not wonder that ignorant people should suppose them to be something more than mere brutes. I think there is something very human about a bear,—they have such thoughtful, sensible-looking eyes."

"Their power of standing upright, and even of taking some steps in that position, may have contributed to the same idea," replied Miss Winston. "It is universally asserted by hunters that the bear will not

attack a sleeping man; and they sometimes take strange freaks of forbearance and attachment towards human beings, especially children. I recollect not many years ago hearing of a case which seems almost incredible. A little girl who was lost in the woods for two or three days, asserted, when she was found, that she had slept every night with a bear. She declared that she lay down by a hollow log; that the bear came and lay down by her; that she was afraid at first, but the bear licked her face, and then she put her arms round his neck and went to sleep. A tame bear at Nancy, in Lorraine, during a severe winter, took a starving Savoyard boy under his protection, kept him in his arms while he slept, played with him, and shared his food with him, and, though he allowed the boy full liberty, furiously resented any attempt to take his protégé from him by force. Nevertheless, it must be confessed that tame bears sometimes take fits of ferocity, and have been known treacherously to destroy the lives of those to whom they had seemed to be the most attached.

"Bears have the following general characteristics. They have forty-two teeth,

—namely, twelve incisors or cutting-teeth, of which two or three are occasionally missing, two canine teeth above and below, and twelve molars in the upper jaw and fourteen in the lower, which seem to be better adapted to a fruit than to a flesh diet. They have five toes on each foot, armed with strong and sharp claws, which are more or less non-retractile and fitted for climbing and digging. All the limbs are strongly made, and they stand comparatively high on their feet. The ears are well proportioned, the eyes rather small; the tail is very short or almost entirely wanting, and the fur thick, long and usually handsome. In wintry regions bears usually hibernate; that is, they retire to safe retreats, either under the snow, in hollow trees, or in lairs constructed of boughs of trees and moss, where they pass the winter months, without food or drink, in a state of apparent torpidity. They are said to be extremely fat when they emerge from their retreats, but become greatly emaciated immediately afterwards. It is also said that when bears are unable to hibernate they are subject to temporary blindness; and this was the case with a

fine, half-grown cub which was carried from Quebec to England on board of a man-of-war, and which was entirely blind from the end of November till the end of February. This blindness seemed to cause him but little inconvenience, as he went about the ship with great confidence and agility, and in his gambols with the young midshipmen was fully a match for his playfellows.

"Bears are fond of sweets, especially honey, and will sometimes run great risks to obtain it. It was the belief of the ancients that the bear was troubled with blindness and headache and resorted to the stings of the bees as a counter-irritant. If they find a bee-tree, they will work with great assiduity till they make a hole large enough to introduce their paws and draw out honey, bees and all. They also eat berries and acorns, and are very destructive to green corn. I can remember when the alarm of 'Bears in the corn!' used to be heard every now and then in summer. They will also enter cellars and steal milk; and all of them—at least in captivity—are fond of bread and cakes."

"They like cakes the best," said Daisy.

"Mr. Barton's bear does. When Lizzy offers him a cracker and a piece of bread, he will always take the cracker first."

"Has Mr. Barton got a bear?" asked Antoinette. "I should like to see it. I never saw one near."

"We will go down to-morrow," said Annie; "and you shall see it, and feed it too, if you like, and old Mrs. Barton will tell you stories without end. She is a kind old lady. But go on, aunt, if you please. I think bears are as interesting as any animals we have had."

"Bears," continued Miss Winston, "have been divided by naturalists into four principal groups. First, Helarctos, or Sun-bears; second, Prochilas, or Tumbler-bears, sometimes called the labiated bear; third, Ursus, or bears proper; and finally, Thalarctos, or Marine bears.

"The sun-bears, the first in order, are natives of the torrid zone alone, and differ from the true bears in having close, short fur. The body is long in proportion to its height at the shoulders; the ears are small and round, the muzzle short and broad, with lips capable of being considerably ex-

tended; the tongue is very long, the claws long and crooked, and there is a clear, white spot upon the breast. The colour is jet-black, with the exception of the white spot above mentioned and the muzzle, which is of a yellowish colour. It is very sagacious and gentle, and has a wonderful fondness for all sorts of dainties, especially honey, which, its long, flexible tongue is well adapted for devouring. It haunts the neighbourhood of villages in order to devour the young shoots of the cocoanut-trees, of which it is very fond, and does much mischief in this way; but it does not attack man, and, indeed, never eats flesh unless pressed by hunger. Sir Stamford Raffles had one which was very tame and a great favourite. He says, 'He lived two years in my possession. He was brought up in the nursery with the children, and when admitted to my table, as was frequently the case, gave a proof of his taste by refusing to eat any fruit but mangostins or drink any wine but champagne. The only time I ever knew him out of humour was on an occasion when no wine was forthcoming. He was naturally of an affection-

ate disposition, and it was never found necessary to chain or chastise him. It was usual for this bear, the cat, the dog and a small blue mountain-lory of New Holland to mess together and all eat out of the same dish. His favourite playfellow was the dog, whose teasing and worrying he always bore with the utmost playfulness and good-humour. As he grew up he became a very powerful animal, and in his rambles in the garden he would lay hold of the largest plantains, the stems of which he could hardly embrace, and tear them up by the roots.'

"The other Sun-bear, the Bornean, greatly resembles the first, except that the patch on the breast is of a yellow or orange colour and nearly square. The one kept in the Tower of London was as sociable and amiable in his disposition as the individual just described; was very fond of his keeper and took pains to attract his notice and that of the spectators, and, as it were, to entertain them by performing various antics, such as standing on its hind-legs, opening its jaws and protruding its long and slender tongue, stretching out its

neck and fore-feet and making motions as if to stand on its head. It was very voracious, would eat without cessation if allowed, and finally fell a victim to its own gluttony, over-eating itself one hot morning and dying within ten minutes,—a sad warning to all little boys and girls who are too fond of good things."

Matilda looked a little as if she thought this was meant for her.

"The next upon our list is the tumbler, labiated or sloth bear,—one of the most curious and uncouth in appearance of any of the race. This animal, when first brought to Europe, was considered a sloth, and called the five-fingered or ursine sloth; but further examinations have proved that it is really a bear. It has only four incisor teeth in the lower jaw, and these are rather liable to fall out, and one is often entirely missing. The muzzle is long, and the lips capable of being protruded in the form of a proboscis. The ears are small and pointed, the eyes small, and there is a great profusion of long half-erect hair upon the back and sides of the throat, part of which curls over the head. Under the throat is a white mark

resembling the letter V or Y. Its powers of smell are extraordinary. It is very gentle and sagacious; and these qualities, together with its ludicrous figure, make it a great favourite with the East Indian jugglers and mountebanks, who teach it to perform many curious feats. There were for a long time a pair kept in the Zoological Gardens in London. In manners they were rather melancholy, but not ill-tempered or lazy. They lived together on very friendly and social terms, often lying huddled close together for hours, keeping up a low rattling whine or purring, which was so far from unmusical that many people called it their song. They generally kept their fore-paws at their mouth when they made this noise. The one which I saw did not purr, that I recollect, but it seemed very gentle and fond of its keeper, who, however, said he did not think it was to be trusted, as it was fond of blood; and in India whole families of them are accused of attacking travellers, and, after throwing them down, munching the hands and feet of the victim till the bones are crushed, and then sucking the limbs almost reduced to a pulp, but tearing the flesh very

little. This fact is well attested; and the form of the teeth and jaws is well adapted to such an operation. At other times, however, they will run harmlessly in the path before the traveller, seeming to take delight in amusing him with their antics and feats of climbing and tumbling."

"It seems to me," said Miss Taylor, "that I have heard this munching-propensity attributed to the common black bear; but I cannot recall any particulars."

"Dear me!" exclaimed Antoinette. "I shall not go near him, then. I should not like to have my hands crushed to pieces by a bear."

"Oh, you need not be afraid of old Bruin," said Sidney. "He is always kept chained up; and, besides, he is very gentle. He eats out of Lizzie Barton's hands. But now come the regular bears."

"The bears proper are by far the most numerous and the most widely diffused," continued Miss Winston, "being found throughout the North of Europe, in Asia, and all over North America. The brown bear inhabits almost all the mountainous parts of Europe, and was formerly very

common in the British Islands, as we learn from classic authors that British and Caledonian bears were much esteemed for the sports of the amphitheatre. They were formerly imported into England in large numbers, that they might be baited with dogs in places called bear-gardens; and we find constant allusion to this barbarous and cruel pastime in the works of Shakspeare and other writers of his and later times. It was one of the amusements provided for Queen Elizabeth during her famous visit to Kenilworth; and a bear-ward was a recognised officer in several noble households! At the present day the word 'bear-garden' has become a name for every thing coarse and unrefined.

"The brown bear stands erect with ease, and assumes that position when at bay, endeavouring to suffocate men and animals by squeezing, or, as it is called, hugging them. They are usually shot with rifles; but the peasants of the North occasionally attack them single-handed, having the left arm guarded with several thicknesses of bear-skin and the right armed with a very keen-edged sharp-bladed knife. As the

bear rears upon his hind-legs, the man gives him several quick stabs, and at the same time keeps him at a distance with his guarded arm, so as to prevent him from giving the dreaded hug, or still more dreaded kick, by which it is able to beat down its antagonist with one blow.

"A black bear with a white collar or ring around its neck is also found in Sweden, but it is neither so large nor so common as the brown bear. A whitish bear was formerly found in great abundance in Syria, and was a very dangerous animal; but it has now become comparatively rare. It prefers flesh to vegetables, but occasionally commits great ravages in the fields of pulse and grain. It is sometimes a reddish brown, sometimes almost white. The bears mentioned in Holy Scripture were probably of this variety, as they seem to have been much more formidable than the common bear of Europe. A brown bear is found also in Hindostan; but very little is known of its habits.

"America affords several varieties of bears, of which the black is the most common. Your friend Bruin is a fine example of this

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species. It is the smallest of the American bears, and very gentle except when pressed by hunger or acting in defence of its cubs. The fur is black and glossy, except the fore part of the head, which is reddish brown. The eyes are rather small, but thoughtful and intelligent-looking, and the general expression—at least, in captivity—is mild and appealing. It is active, good at climbing, and stands erect upon its hind-legs with ease. It is not so carnivorous even as the brown bear of Europe, preferring berries, roots, beechnuts, acorns, corn, and in fact almost any vegetable diet, to meat. It is extremely fond of green corn, and destroys great quantities of it."

"They like apples, too," said Daisy. "I remember Grandmother Whipple used to tell us about the bear that ate the apples."

"And about the bear that ate the milk," added Sidney. "No: that was Aunt Julia's story."

"Very few things come amiss to them. The black bear, like the brown, hibernates, generally selecting a place under a fallen log or in a hollow tree, to which he retires upon the first fall of snow and dozes away

his winter very comfortably. In this state, many hundreds are destroyed every winter for the sake of the fur, which is much valued for military decorations, while the flesh forms an agreeable article of food. The fat is remarkably greasy and penetrating, and is said (with what truth I know not) to be very nourishing to the hair. The yellow bear of Carolina is a variety of this species, and is said to possess more intelligence than his black cousin. Colonel Smith at one time had one of each in his possession, and says of them, 'While the black bear lay down in perfect apathy, and our attention was directed to another object, a familiar breathing over our shoulder made us fancy some unceremonious intruder was looking over our work; and, upon turning round, we perceived it was the yellow bear, carefully raised upon his hind-feet, not touching our clothes with his fore-paws, but having his snout over our shoulder and curiously intent upon what was doing upon the paper.'"

"I suppose he felt a natural interest in seeing whether his portrait was like him," observed Richard.

"Many tame animals are very curious

about the operations of reading and writing," said Miss Winston, "and will watch the pen or the book for a long while with great interest, sometimes seeming really annoyed at being unable to comprehend what it is all about. The spectacled bear is found in the Andes, and is remarkable for having the nose yellow, and a circle of the same extending round the eye, leaving the orbit black. The barren-ground bear is larger than the black bear, and more resembles the brown bear of Europe. It inhabits the barren and desolate regions that lie between the last forests upon the continent of America and the Arctic Circle, and forms the principal article of food and commerce to the tribes that roam over those desolate tracts.

"The grisly bear is to the other bears what the lion and tiger are to the smaller felines, and is the most to be dreaded of any wild animal of the American continent, except perhaps the jaguar of South America. Its immense strength, which seems to equal that of the lion, its ferocity, its great tenacity of life, and its power of swimming, combine to make it an object of dread to hunters in

the far West and in California. A full-grown grisly bear will pull down a bison and kill it, and afterwards carry away the carcass, which often weighs one thousand pounds. Like other carnivorous animals, it is much more to be dreaded after it has obtained a taste of human flesh; and many stories are told by Western hunters and trappers of encounters with these animals. Sir John Richardson, whose travels are extremely interesting, tells the following story of one of them. 'A party of voyageurs, who had been employed all day in tracking a canoe up the Saskatchawan, had seated themselves in the twilight by a fire, and were busied in preparing their supper, when a huge grisly bear sprang over the canoe, which was tilted up behind them, and, seizing one of the men by the shoulder, carried him off. The rest fled in terror, with the exception of one named Bonnaur, who, grasping his gun, followed the bear as it was retreating leisurely with his prey. He called to his unfortunate companion that he was afraid of hitting him if he fired at the bear; but the latter entreated him to fire immediately without hesitation, as the bear

was squeezing him to death. Upon this he discharged his piece into the body of the bear, which instantly dropped his prey to pursue Bonnaur. He escaped with difficulty, and the bear retreated to a thicket, where he was supposed to have died; but, the curiosity of the party not being a match for their fears, the fact of his death was not ascertained. The man who was rescued had his arm fractured, and was otherwise severely injured, but finally recovered.'"

"It is a pity they did not find out whether the bear was killed," remarked Sidney. "I would have gone to see, and had his skin, to pay for the trouble he had given me."

"Then you would have done a foolish thing," replied his aunt. "The best and boldest hunters are very content to let him alone if he lets them alone, and do not fire at him unless it becomes necessary, or when they can take him at a great disadvantage, Sir John adds, 'I am told there is a man now living in the vicinity of Edmonton House, who was attacked by a grisly bear, which sprang out of a thicket and with one blow of its paw completely scalped him,

laying bare the skull and bringing the skin of the forehead down over the eyes. Assistance coming up, the bear made off without doing him any further injury; but, the skin not being replaced, the poor man has lost his sight, though he thinks his eyes are uninjured.' Mr. Drummond, in his excursions upon the Rocky Mountains, had frequent opportunities of observing the manners of the grisly bears; and it often happened that upon turning the point of a rock or sharp angle of a valley he came suddenly upon one or more of them. On these occasions they reared up on their hind-legs and made a noise like a person breathing hard,—but much louder. He kept his ground, without attempting to molest them; and they, on their part, after attentively regarding him for some time, generally turned and galloped off,—though, from their known disposition, there is but little doubt that he would have been torn in pieces had he lost his presence of mind and attempted to fly. When he discovered them at a distance, he generally frightened them away by beating on a large tin box in which he carried his specimens of plants. He never saw more

than four of them together; and two of them he supposes to have been cubs.

"You can hardly read any book of Western travels without finding abundance of anecdotes of grisly bears, all of which serve to show that he is a very dangerous animal. When fully grown, they are said to measure nine feet from the nose to the tail; and some have been killed even larger. Their weight is almost eight hundred pounds. The tail is extremely short and small, and covered with hair; so that it is a standing joke among the Indian hunters, as Sir John Richardson observes, to desire any one unacquainted with the animal to take hold of his tail. The paws are very large, the fore-paws measuring nine inches without the claws, which are fully six inches in length, straight, smooth and very strong, and well adapted for digging. These claws are much prized as ornaments by the Indian braves, who wear them as necklaces. The muzzle is long, narrow and flat, and the canine teeth very large and strong. Notwithstanding its unwieldy appearance, it runs with great quickness; but, owing to the form of its claws, the full-grown bear

is unable to climb trees. The hair is long and abundant, varying through all the shades of gray and blackish brown. The eyes are rather small and sunken. It is said to be quite untamable."

"Did you ever see one?" asked Antoinette.

"I once saw two half-grown cubs in a menagerie," replied Miss Winston. "They were very sulky and irritable, but seemed to be friendly with each other,—though the keepers did not succeed in gaining their confidence. They were ugly creatures, and their fur—perhaps from the effect of their confinement—seemed very harsh and dirty, entirely different from that either of the white or black bear."

"I never saw a white bear," said Matilda.

"The fur rug in the other parlour is made of the skin of a white bear," said Miss Louisa. "It is of a yellowish colour, you may observe, thick and long upon the outside edges but close and shorter in the middle. My father intended to have the natural shape preserved; but the man mistook his orders and cut off the outside,

so as to bring it into a more regular form. The Polar bear is called the marine bear in our classification, on account of its almost amphibious habits. They inhabit only the extreme Northern regions, seldom descending below the fifty-fifth parallel of latitude, which, you may observe, crosses Hudson's Bay just at the entrance of James Bay. They have been found in lower latitudes borne upon floating ice; and in this way they are often carried from the coasts of Greenland to those of Iceland, where they commit such ravages that the whole population of the island turns out to destroy them. They are found upon all the Asiatic coasts of the Frozen Ocean, in Spitzbergen, Nova Zembla, Greenland, Labrador, and on the coast of Baffin's and Hudson's Bays. Dr. Kane, who reached a higher northern latitude than any one else has ever done, found them still to the north of him, and believed that they were to be met with as far north as the open sea which is now almost positively known to exist around the North Pole, and the borders of which were actually reached by his companions, Morton and Hans the Esqui-

maux. The early voyagers gave wonderful accounts of the size and strength of these creatures; and, though later travellers show some exaggeration in these stories, enough still remains to show that they are sufficiently formidable. The greatest length recorded is eight feet from nose to tail, and the greatest weight sixteen hundred pounds. Seven feet is a more ordinary size, and many are smaller: I am certain the one that I saw could not have measured more than five feet. The head of the Polar bear is long and flat, the ears and mouth small, the eyes moderately large, the neck long and thick, the foot large and the sole of it covered with hair. The Esquimaux take off the skin of the legs and feet whole, and use it as a boot and legging; and it is the mode to let the claws project beyond the foot, as they were worn by the original owner."

"They would be convenient for walking upon the ice," remarked Richard; "but I should think the long claws would be in the way in running."

"The claws are not nearly so long as those of the grisly bear," replied Miss

Louisa, "but are short, thick and much curved. The food of the white bear consists principally of fish and the flesh of the seal and walrus; but he does not disdain birds, birds' eggs, biscuit, flour, cloth, or, in fact, any thing he can get. Captain Lyon gives the following account of his hunting the seal:—'The bear, on seeing his intended prey, gets quietly into the water and swims until to the leeward of him, from whence, by frequent short dives, he silently makes his approaches, and so arranges his distance that by the last dive he comes to the spot where the seal is lying. If the poor animal attempts to escape by rolling into the water, he falls into the bear's clutches; if, on the contrary, he lies still, his destroyer makes a powerful spring, kills him on the ice and destroys him at his leisure.'"

"Is the flesh of the white bear good to eat?" asked Miss Taylor. "I think I have read in some Arctic voyages that it was unwholesome."

"It was believed to be so by some of the earlier travellers in those regions," replied Miss Winston; "but later ones have eaten of it abundantly, and have found it not only

harmless, but beneficial; and Dr. Kane says that, eaten raw, it forms one of the best remedies for the scurvy."

"Oh, shocking!" exclaimed Matilda. "He did not eat it raw, did he?"

"Yes: both bear and walrus meat were eaten raw, and found much more beneficial in that state than when cooked. Dr. Kane thought there were few things better than a slice of frozen walrus; and it was certainly a fortunate thing in their case that they found it so, for their means of cooking were scanty in the extreme. There has always been an idea that the liver of the bear was poisonous. Dr. Kane was at first inclined to treat this as a prejudice, and partook of it once or twice on his first voyage without receiving any harm; but on his last voyage he found himself attacked, after eating it, with symptoms resembling those from poison. But if the bears were beneficial to him in one way they were mischievous enough in another, by destroying his deposits of provisions, even when he thought he had secured them against even the possibility of such an attack. He gives the following account of their performances:—

"'The first cache, which I had relied so much upon, was entirely destroyed. It had been built with extreme care of rocks which had been assembled by very heavy labour and adjusted often with much aid from capstan-bars as levers. The entire construction was, so far as our means permitted, effective and resisting. Yet these tigers of the ice seemed to have encountered scarce an obstacle. Not a morsel of pemmican remained, except in the iron cases, which, being round with conical ends, defied both their claws and teeth. They had rolled and pawed them in every direction, tossing them about like footballs, although more than eighty pounds in weight. An alcohol-can, strongly iron bound, was dashed into fragments, and a tin can of liquor crunched and twisted about into a ball. The claws of the beast had perforated the metal, and torn it up as with a cold chisel. They were too dainty for salt meats. Ground coffee they had an evident relish for; old canvas was a favourite for some reason or other; even our flag, which had been reared to take possession of the waste, was gnawed down to the very staff. They had made a regular

frolic of it,—rolling our bread-barrels over the ice-foot and into the broken ice beyond; and, unable to masticate our hard, heavy India-rubber cloth, they had tied it up into unimaginable hard knots. Mr. McGary describes the whole area round the cache as marked by the well-worn paths of these animals; and an adjacent slope of ice-covered rocks, with an angle of forty-five degrees, was so worn and covered with hair as to suggest the idea that they had been sliding down on their haunches,—a performance, by-the-way, at which I afterwards caught them myself.'"

Sidney and Richard were very much amused at the idea of the bears making sliding-parties and entertaining their company with Dr. Kane's provisions. "I wonder what they thought while they were pulling the things about?" said Annie. "They must have wondered how they came there. I should like to have been behind a rock and overheard their conversation, if I had understood the bears' language."

"Even supposing you had understood the language, I doubt whether you would have stood long to listen to them with the thermometer forty degrees below zero," re-

marked Miss Winston,—"especially as there would have been every probability of their smelling you out and adding you to their literally cold collation."

"Did Dr. Kane have any more to do with the bears?" asked Daisy.

"Yes, plenty more."

"Won't you read us some of them to-night?" begged Richard. "You know we boys shall not have time to read the book itself before we go,—at least, I am afraid not; and we shall not mind reading them twice, at any rate. Please read us a hunting-story, if there is one."

"There are two or three hunting-stories," replied Miss Winston; "but they are so long that I cannot read them all this evening, but must content myself with the shortest, which will show you how the bear, when hard pressed, defends not only herself but her little one. The bear was one which was encountered by Morton and Hans on their journey towards the Polar sea.

"'The bear fled; but, the little one being unable to keep ahead of the dogs or to keep up with her, she turned back, and, putting her head under its haunches, threw it some

distance ahead. The cub being safe for the moment, she would wheel round and face the dogs, so as to give it a chance to run away; but it always stopped just as it alighted till the mother came up and threw it ahead again. It seemed to expect her aid and to be unable to go on without it. Sometimes the mother would run a few yards ahead, as if to coax the young one up to her; and when the dogs came up with her she would turn on them and drive them back. Then, as they dodged her blows, she would rejoin the cub and push it on, sometimes putting her head under it, sometimes catching it in her mouth by the nape of the neck.

"'For some time she managed her retreat with great alacrity, leaving the two men far in the rear. But, after she had gone a mile and a half, her pace slackened, and, the little one being jaded, she soon came to a halt.

"'The fight was now a desperate one. The mother never went more than ten yards ahead, constantly looking at the cub. When the dogs came near her, she would sit upon her haunches and take the little one between her hind-legs, fighting the dogs with

her fore-paws and roaring so she could be heard a mile off. "Never," said Morton, "was an animal more distressed." She would stretch out her neck and snap at the nearest dog with her shining teeth, whirling her fore-paws like the sails of a windmill. If she missed her aim, not daring to pursue one dog, lest the others should harm the cub, she would give a great roar of baffled rage, and go on, pawing and snapping and facing the ring, grinning at them with her mouth stretched wide. When the men came up, the little one was perhaps rested, for it was able to turn round with its dam, no matter how quick she moved, so as to keep always in front of her belly. The five dogs were all the time frisking about her actively, tormenting her like so many gad-flies: indeed, they made it difficult to draw a bead on her without killing them. But Hans, lying on his elbow, took a quick aim and shot her through the head. She dropped at once, and rolled over without moving a muscle.

"'The dogs made towards her at once; but the cub jumped upon her body and reared up, for the first time growling hoarsely. They

seemed quite afraid of the little creature, she growled so fiercely and made so much noise; and, while tearing mouthfuls of hair from the dead mother, they would spring aside the moment the cub turned towards them. The men drove off the dogs for a time, but were obliged to shoot the cub at last, as she would not quit the body. Hans fired, but did not kill her, though he knocked her down; but she was still able to climb upon her mother's body and try to defend it, her mouth bleeding like a gutter-spout. They were obliged to dispatch her with stones.'"

There was a moment's silence as Miss Winston finished her story, which was broken by a suppressed sobbing sound from behind Annie. She turned round rather startled and found Daisy crying as if her heart would break,—too bitterly, indeed, to be able to give any account of the cause of her grief. But Sidney guessed it presently.

"I know!" said he, half laughing, half crying too. "She is crying about the bear. Isn't that it, Daisy?"

The little girl returned some answer, in

which the words "poor little bear!" were all that were intelligible.

'Pshaw!" said Matilda, half aside, to Kate. "It is more than half affectation, just to have a fuss made about her."

Annie favoured her cousin with a glance which was certainly not a very friendly one, and busied herself in comforting Daisy, who presently dried her eyes and looked up.

"It was foolish to cry," she said; "but it seemed so hard for the poor——" There was imminent danger of breaking down again; but she conquered it and returned to her work, without, however, trying to finish the sentence.

"Poor Nannook seems to be a person of a good deal of character," observed Richard; "but she does not seem to hug like the other bears."

"According to Dr. Kane, she makes more use of her teeth than of her paws. In another account of a fight between the dogs and a bear near the ship's side, the bear seized her antagonists by the neck and threw them to a great distance. The Newfoundlands generally alighted senseless; but the Esquimaux dogs, better trained to

the conflict, relaxed all their muscles as they fell and rose to their feet in an instant, ready for a fresh attack. Should a single Esquimaux, travelling over the ice, come upon the traces of a bear, he follows them without hesitation, knowing that his well-trained dogs will, by diverting the animal's attention, cause it to turn to one side and thus expose the other to a fatal thrust with the spear. They often receive severe wounds in these encounters; but, owing to their great caution, but few lives are lost."

"Do Polar bears sleep during the winter?" asked Annie.

"It is said that some of the females do so, and only awake when the sun is tolerably high, bringing forth their young in their snug retreats. Other females roam abroad all winter, and are then very dangerous."

CHAPTER XI.

CONCLUSION.

The next day after luncheon all the children went down to the village to see the bear. Matilda and Daisy rode in the wagon, with Richard to drive. Kate rode the little brown pony which daily brought her up to her lessons with Miss Taylor and carried her back again when she did not stay all night, and Sidney his pet bay mare. Annie had intended to ride likewise, and had her habit actually on, when Antoinette came to her room, and, much to her cousin's surprise, said, with some hesitation,—

"Annie, do you mind walking down to the village instead of riding? It is not very warm; and I want a chance to talk to you."

Annie hesitated a moment. She did not like to give up her ride; but she reflected

that Antoinette was going away very soon, and determined to gratify her.

"No, certainly," said she,—"if you want to walk; but I thought you would rather go in the wagon. It will be very pleasant. The sun does not shine and it is not dusty; and we can set out before the others and take our time. Only please don't be long in getting ready."

"I am ready now, all but my hat; and that is down in the hall. I will wait for you there."

Matilda was astonished to see her sister and Annie setting off together, and vented several sarcasms about exclusiveness and secrets; but Antoinette bore it all very good-naturedly and only laughed when Matilda said,—

"I think you had better take Annie home with you. I shall not be considered good enough for you to associate with any longer."

Both the children and their elders observed how much Antoinette's temper had improved lately, and Miss Winston sometimes wished that she might keep her still longer; but the present decision was that

the girls were to return to Boston when their cousins went to school.

Antoinette and Annie walked along for some distance very quietly, the one altogether silent, the other wondering what her cousin could have to say to her and when she was going to begin. It was not till they had climbed over a stile and entered upon a path which led "across lots" and considerably shortened the way to the village that Antoinette opened the subject.

"Annie——" said she, and stopped.

"Well?" said Annie, after waiting a little.

"I wish——" Another pause.

"I wish you would begin," said Annie, smiling: "we shall be at the village before you have made up your mind to open your mouth, and your great secret will remain untold."

"It is no great secret, nor any secret at all," replied Antoinette,—"though I did not want to speak to Matilda till I had talked to you——" She made another little pause, and then said, abruptly, "Annie, I wish I could stay here this winter instead of going home and beginning school again. I don't know

whether you would like to have me, but I wish I could."

Annie was at first too much surprised to answer. "Why, Antoinette!" she said, at length. "I thought you would not spend a winter in the country upon any account. You said you should die of stupidity; and I am really afraid you would find it very dull, especially as the boys are to be away."

"I don't care for the dulness," said Antoinette. "I like the way you go on here, and I like reciting to Miss Taylor much better than going to school. I am sure I learn faster. You see, I am not naturally quick like Matilda, and our school is so large that the scholars have to help themselves a great deal. It is against the rules to ask for an explanation out of class. That does well enough for the bright ones, but not for dull scholars like me."

"You have improved a great deal, I know," said Annie, "and in other things besides lessons, and I should like to have you stay very much." Annie made this declaration with the most perfect sincerity,—though she could not have said as much

when Antoinette first came. "But—excuse me, Antoinette—I should not think you would want to stay."

"Why not?"

"Away from your mother and sister all winter? I would not leave my mother if she were alive, not even for Aunt Louisa; and I shall never be separated from Daisy if I can help it."

"Mother won't miss me much," said Antoinette, rather bitterly: "she is out all the time; and Matilda and I are not like you and Daisy: we don't get on together at all. If she were not my sister, I should not like her at all,—she is so cross."

"Oh, Antoinette!" remonstrated Annie, greatly shocked,—"your own only sister!"

"Well, I know it sounds heathenish——"

"It *is* heathenish!" interrupted Annie. "'He that loveth not his brother is a murderer.'"

"Do you think we can love people by trying to, Annie?"

"I suppose so, of course, or we should not be commanded to. But, really, I don't see how you and Matilda can be good

friends when you are always *snip-snapping* so."

"Well, I know that too. But Matilda begins at me, and then I answer before I think."

"And sometimes you begin," said Annie.

"I don't deny that, either. I know I am not a good girl, Annie, but I want to be, and I have been trying to be; and that is the reason why I want to stay here,—because it is easier than it is at home; and I think if you should ask Aunt Louisa to ask mother to let me, perhaps she would."

"Why not ask her yourself?" inquired Annie.

"Oh, I don't know,—because I don't like to. When I am at home, and want to go anywhere with one of the girls, I always get her to ask mother; and she is a great deal more apt to let me."

"That would not be Aunt Louisa's way at all," said Annie. "We always go to her ourselves if we want any thing; and I do not think she would be pleased if she knew you were afraid to ask her. But I will go with you to her, if that will help you."

"And you really and truly would like to have me stay?"

"Of course, or I should not say so."

"I don't suppose *you* would," said Antoinette. "You are not like some people," she concluded, abruptly, as though saying something different from what she had at first intended. "Like Matilda and me, for instance," she added, after a moment's pause.

"I'll tell you what it is, Antoinette," said Annie: "I wouldn't talk about Matilda's faults if I were you. They are not my business, at least; and it does not sound well for sisters to discuss each other's failings. You think I did not like you when you first came, and that is true; and the first thing that prejudiced me against you was your telling, that first evening, how cross Matilda was when she was sick, and how she made herself so eating confectionary though your mother had forbidden her to buy it."

"Well," said Antoinette, after a little pause, "I believe you are right, and I won't say any thing about her, but only about myself." She coloured, as she added, with what seemed a painful effort, "When I

first came here, Annie, I did not care any thing about telling the truth. I would almost as soon say one thing as another; and even now it is hard for me to be *straight* about every little thing. I suppose you think it very contemptible, and so do I; but I cannot help it,—not always."

"It never was one of my temptations," said Annie; "and then I was always brought up to hate and despise a lie."

"That is another thing," interrupted Antoinette. "When you call a thing a *lie* it somehow seems a great deal more serious matter than it does when you talk about a wrong story or a falsehood."

"I know it," said Annie. "My mother always said that a lie was a lie, and that the best way was to use the Bible words. I remember once saying that one of the little girls in school had told a wrong story. Mother told me that there was no such word in the Bible; and for my next Sunday's lesson I copied out all the places where it speaks of lying and liars. I have got the paper now. There was nothing father and mother were so particular about; and Aunt Louisa is the same. She taught

us all to think that there is nothing so despicable (besides being wicked) as a lie."

The girls were now standing on the little foot-bridge, looking over the railing into the river, which was here quite deep. There were large trees at each end of this bridge, which cast their shadows entirely across it; and it was a favourite resting-place for the children in their walks to and from the village.

"How pleasant it is here!" said Annie, after a little pause. "If I should ever go away, I should like to have a picture of this bridge. I think one might make a very pretty sketch from that point below."

Antoinette did not answer; and Annie, glancing at the reflection of her face in the water, saw she was crying.

"Pray, don't cry!" she hastened to say. "I did not mean to hurt your feelings. You know you began talking about it, or I should not have mentioned it."

Antoinette pressed her cousin's hands. "Never mind," said she. "It was not any thing you said, but I am so ashamed to think of it; and I cannot get over it, though

I do try. Only yesterday——" Her voice was again lost in sobs.

"But you should not be so easily discouraged, Netty," urged Annie. "Every one has to try a great many times before they can overcome such a fault. And it is every thing to make a beginning."

"You don't know," said Antoinette: "you are so good——"

"I!" interrupted Annie. "You don't know me, if you think so."

"And you cannot tell what up-hill work it is," she continued. "I can tell you, when you were all talking about that poor boy—that Jack—I thought I knew how to sympathize with him; and I thought if you had had as much trouble trying to be very very good as I have had, you would show more feeling for him."

Annie coloured deeply. "You think I am so good, Netty," she said, in a low voice, and without looking up from the contemplation of the little fish that were dancing under the bridge; "but there is one thing now! I know I have been very unjust about that, and have hurt Dick's feelings; and yet it seems as though I could not make up my

mind to tell him so. I cannot bear to say, in so many words, that I have been wrong or mistaken about any thing even to myself."

"Why do you tell me, then?" was Antoinette's very natural question.

"I am sure I don't know," replied Annie, half laughing, but still leaning over the railing, so as to hide her face, "unless it is because we have got into the spirit of being confidential. But it is true that I am proud and self-willed, and jealous besides."

"But that is not so bad as——" Antoinette pronounced the word as if it choked her—"as lying."

"I don't know that. I suppose one sin is nearly or quite as bad as another. They must all be repented of alike, if we wish to be forgiven. And that reminds me of what I was going to say before." Annie dropped her voice again and looked still more steadfastly into the water. "If you really want to improve yourself, you know what you must do. Ask Him to help you, you know."

"I do," replied Antoinette. "I never used to say my prayers at home, unless there was some one to see me and tell mother if

I didn't; and it was only a form, at any rate: but since I have really wanted to be good I have done differently. But I get discouraged about that, too, because the more I pray the more wrong things I see, and a great many things look downright wicked to me that I never used to care about. It makes my life look like your old gray frock that Aunt Louisa was going to mend yesterday: at first she thought there were only one or two rents, but when she held it up to the light it was all full of holes and frays and not worth mending."

"And what did she say?" asked Annie, smiling at the odd illustration.

"She said you must have a new one."

"Well, that is just what she would tell you. You must learn to walk in newness of life, as the Bible says. You know the words of the prayer, 'Create and make in us new and contrite hearts;' and that is what we all want in order to be good,—not just mending a bit here and a bit there, but making over altogether. But, Netty, Aunt Louisa would explain this to you a great deal better than I can,—or Mr. Crediton."

"Oh, Annie! I never could talk to him: I should be afraid. Wouldn't you?"

"No," replied Annie. "I might be afraid of some ministers, perhaps, but not of him: he is so kind and fatherly, and at the same time almost like our companion. I don't think that feeling can be right, either,—to be afraid of clergymen, I mean. They get grave ways sometimes, I know,—one don't wonder at that; but I believe if young people were to go to them oftener and more frankly for advice, they would be pleased instead of offended. Of course, one would not want to be always talking of one's religious feelings to them more than to any others; but still every one wants advice sometimes, and then the minister is one proper person to give it, and our Sunday-school teacher is another."

The colloquy was interrupted by the approach of a boy, who was coming from the village with a bag over his shoulder, whistling as he walked. It proved to be Jack himself; and Antoinette wondered whether her cousin would speak to him. At another time, perhaps, she would not have done so; but she remembered what they had just been talking about, and resolved to conquer herself.

"Good-evening, Jack," she said, in quite a cordial tone, and added, "Aunt is very much obliged to you for the beautiful table you sent her. It was just such a one as she wanted."

"She's welcome," replied Jack, colouring between pleasure and embarrassment. "I'd do more than that for her, if I could." He longed to tell the girls that it was dangerous to lean over the bridge as they had been doing when he came up; but his bashfulness got the better of his judgment, and he walked on, while the girls resumed their lounging attitude. He had not gone many steps when he heard a piercing scream behind him, and, turning back, saw Antoinette standing alone on the bridge, and noticed that part of the railing was gone. The river was high, and under the bridge was a deep and rather dangerous hole.

It was the work of an instant to throw down his bag and regain the river-side; but Annie had already sunk. As she reappeared a little farther down, he sprang in, and, seizing her dress, drew her safely to land. But the bank was high and the current rather strong, and he might have had some diffi-

culty still, but for the assistance of a farmer who was passing in the road and was attracted to the spot by the screams of Antoinette. He drew Annie up the bank, and then gave his hand to Jack, who was so exhausted by his labours that he staggered and fell on the grass.

Annie had lost her senses at the first plunge, but soon recovered them sufficiently to ask for Antoinette, who was already beside her. She was too giddy to walk or even to stand; and it ended by the farmer's taking her in his arms and carrying her to the wagon which he had left standing in the road. By the time he had contrived a seat for her and her cousin, Jack had picked up himself and his bag and was making the best of his way towards home. "Jump in, Jack, and ride with the girls," said the farmer. "I guess you need it as much as they do."

"No, thank you," replied Jack. "I would rather walk and get warm. I shall not be half as likely to catch cold. You just drive up to The Meadows as fast as you can."

It did not take much time to reach home, where they made their appearance only a few minutes after the rest of the party had

set out; and, as may be imagined, the figure of Annie, dripping wet and pale as death, excited no little surprise and alarm. But Aunt Louisa was one of those happy persons who never lose their presence of mind under any circumstances. Annie was quickly stripped and put into a warm bed with plenty of blankets, and dosed with hot tea to prevent her from taking cold. Poor Antoinette was almost forgotten in the bustle: she had had a terrible shock; and, when her aunt sought her to hear a particular account of the adventure, she found her lying on the sofa faint and pale, and almost as much in need of care as Annie herself. She seemed to feel as if she had somehow been to blame in the catastrophe; but when the story was told Miss Winston could not perceive it.

"I cannot see that you were in any way in fault," she said. "You could not know that the railing was unsafe; and as to your screaming, it was the very wisest thing to do under the circumstances, since it brought help at once. If you had jumped in after her, it would only have made matters worse."

Antoinette was greatly comforted; but she could not help crying afresh every time she thought of what might have happened, and Miss Winston was obliged to speak with some authority before she became sufficiently composed to leave her with Miss Taylor and go back to Annie, whose head now ached terribly, as it was only too apt to do under any excitement.

Meantime the party at the village were in no small wonderment as to what had become of the girls, who should have arrived before them and who had agreed to meet them at Mr. Barton's. At first the boys only laughed and said they had lingered by the way to talk sentiment; but, when more than an hour passed on and still they did not come, Richard became seriously uneasy.

"What can have happened to the girls, to keep them so long?" he said to Kate.

"Perhaps they have gone to walk by themselves," suggested Matilda.

"They would hardly do that," said Kate. "Antoinette wanted very much to see the bear; and, besides, they would know that we were waiting for them. I cannot think of any accident that could possibly happen be-

tween here and The Meadows, if they kept along the path."

"Nor I," replied Richard; "and yet I cannot help feeling uneasy. It is so unlike Annie to keep any one waiting. Suppose, Sidney, you tie your horse to the back of the wagon and drive the girls home, and I will go back by the road and see if I can see or hear any thing of them."

Sidney agreed, and Richard set out on his walk; but when Matilda found out the change of drivers she declared she could not and would not trust herself in the wagon. She did not believe Sidney could manage the horses, and they would run away: Richard had no business to leave them; and, in short, she would not go with Sidney, if she never got home.

"Then you may stay!" said Sidney, provoked beyond all patience by her absurdity, and perhaps by the imputation cast upon his driving. "And I will go home with Daisy. I know something serious has happened."

"Do get in, Matilda," said Kate, with authority, "and don't make a scene here in the street. Just look at Daisy, how quiet

she is!" Finally, Matilda did get in, and they arrived at home without any mishap,—rather, as it seemed, to the young lady's disappointment. Richard had arrived a few minutes before them, in the greatest alarm, having found the railing of the bridge broken down and Annie's mantle floating on the water. It was a wonderful relief to find the two girls safely in bed in different rooms, and neither apparently much the worse for the accident. Matilda was at first inclined to get up a scene over Annie; but, this being strictly forbidden, she gave way to her ill-humour, and declared that it was all Antoinette's fault,—that she had spoiled the afternoon's pleasure, as she always spoiled every thing she had any thing to do with, and that it would never have happened if she had not taken a freak to walk alone with Annie instead of riding with her. It ended with her grandfather's threatening to send her to bed if she did not behave herself, which so hurt her dignity that she remained silent and sulky for the rest of the evening.

The next morning Annie was able to get up to breakfast, though she confessed to feeling rather tired and languid. She urged

the boys to go and see Jack, to whom they all owed so much, and sent him a kind and grateful message. They found him confined to his bed with a pretty sharp touch of his old complaint, brought on by his cold bath and severe exertion, and suffering a good deal. He was very cheerful, however, and seemed glad to see them. Richard found more difficulty in thanking Jack than he had anticipated: indeed, he quite broke down upon it; but Jack had no trouble in understanding him.

"I am glad to have saved your sister, Dick," he said; "but you know I would have done as much for any girl in the world."

"That does not make us any the less obliged to you," replied Richard. "Grandfather says if there is any thing in the world he can do for you——"

"There is one thing, if it wouldn't be too much trouble," said Jack, as Richard paused. "I was in the city the other day, and went down to the machine-shop, where they make steam-engines. One of the men that I know took me all over the works; and I thought it was the trade above all

others that I should like to learn. But when I asked the man about it he said they did not want to take an apprentice. Now, I know your grandfather has some interest in the works, and I thought perhaps he might get me a place there."

"Would you rather do that than go to school and have an education?" asked Sidney.

"I think I should," said Jack. "Of course I should like to learn all I could; but I have always wanted to be a machinist, more than any thing else in the world."

"Well," said Richard, "we will talk to grandfather about it; and I dare say he can manage it. And now, do you know, Jack, that we are really going to school on Thursday and shall be away till Christmas?"

Jack looked very grave at this intelligence. "I don't see what you want to go away to school for," said he. "I am sure you know enough."

Richard laughed at Jack's idea of his acquirements, and began to tell what he was going to study in school.

"I should think you mean to be some

great character," said Jack, more cheerfully,—"President, or something. What *do* you mean to be, Dick?"

"I have not entirely made up my mind," replied Richard; "but, if I keep on thinking as I do now, I shall study for the ministry."

"You are just the one," said Jack, approvingly. "You are more fit for it now than any one I know. I hope you will come here and preach."

"That is looking a long way ahead," said Richard, smiling. "Just think of all I shall have to do first,—school two years, perhaps, and college four, and then study three more. You will be sending steam-engines all over the world before that time."

'And you, Sidney,—if you are going to be a sailor, as you say sometimes, you will not want so much learning."

"Learning never comes amiss," replied Sidney, "whatever one is. '*Can do*' is easy to carry about, as John says. I expect by the time I get to be a commander you will build a steam-frigate for me."

"Then it is really settled, is it?" asked Jack.

"Yes, I suppose so. Grandfather says I must do as I please about it; and I know what that is. Only I am to go to school a year first, to learn mathematics and astronomy, and what not. What stories we shall have to tell one another when we get together again, after I have gone round the world, perhaps, and you have been away in New York,—perhaps even to Europe, to learn all about steam-engines,—and Dick comes home from college!"

"Castles in the air, Sidney," said Richard.

"Well," replied Sidney, "they are cheap and harmless in this case, at least."

"And will you write to us, Jack? We shall want very much to hear how you get on."

"I will try, if you want me to," replied Jack, evidently much pleased. "But you must not expect much: you know I am a poor hand at the pen."

"Never mind that," said Richard: "you have improved very much; and every one says there is no such good practice as writing letters."

"Shall you be in Sunday-school next Sunday?" asked Jack, as they rose to go.

"Yes, I presume so. Why?"

"Because you will see a new scholar: that's all."

"Are you going?" asked Richard. "I am very glad. You know I always wanted you to; and I am sure you will find it will pay."

"I promised Mr. Crediton I would," said Jack, "and I have learned my lesson. I hope I shall be well enough; for, once having made up my mind, I shall feel rather disappointed to be kept away."

Richard mentioned Jack's wishes to his grandfather, who promised to further them by every means in his power; but he was decidedly of the opinion that Jack should go to school at least a year before entering upon his apprenticeship. He took occasion to visit the saw-mill the same day and talk the matter over with the father and son. Jack was easily brought to see the advantages of such a course,—though he could not help feeling a little disappointed at having his darling scheme put off so long. Mr. Winston declared his intention of paying for

his board and providing him with books, which, as the school was free, would be his only expenses. Mr. Short expressed his acknowledgment in few but emphatic words. Mrs. Short's thanks were rather fainter; and after Mr. Winston had gone she told her husband that if *that* was all they could do for Jack, after what he had done for them, they might as well have let it alone.

"That's all I want to have done for me, ma," said Jack, good-naturedly. "I only want a chance to make my own way. I would rather have worked for my board than to have had the old gentleman pay for it: only it seemed ungracious to refuse."

"It will give you more time to study," observed Mr. Short; "and, as your health is not as strong as it used to be, perhaps it is the best plan. I don't doubt, wife, but the boy will make the best of his time and be a comfort to us in our old age. I wish this one was having as good a chance," he added, patting Sarah Anne's head as she sat on the steps, sewing.

"Sarah Anne is a good scholar already, father," said Jack. "She can read as well

as Richard; and she has been through the Rule of Three."

"She knows enough," said Mrs. Short, crossly. "If she half acts up to her knowledge, or you either, you will be better than you are."

"Aunt," said Richard after tea, "cannot we have one more lecture before we go?"

"We have finished Carnivora, haven't we?" asked Sidney.

"All the larger species," replied Miss Winston; "but there still remain many of the smaller flesh-eating animals, which we have not noticed, and which play an important part in the economy of nature, such as the weasels, the raccoons, the skunks and the gluttons. Besides these, there are the otters and the seals, which subsist upon fish."

"Those are all very small animals," said Sidney.

"Not all: some of the seals are larger than an elephant, and second only to the whale in size."

"Do tell us about them," urged Antoinette: "it is the last evening we shall have by ourselves." (Antoinette was feeling very

happy at this time, for she had received a letter from her mother giving her permission to stay till Christmas if she wished, on condition that she should attend to her lessons regularly with Miss Taylor and read only such books as Aunt Louisa approved,—conditions she very willing undertook to fulfil. Matilda laughed at her, and prophesied that she would find it stupid enough and be glad to come home long before Christmas; but she agreed with her that she got on much faster with Miss Taylor than she did in school, and that her health was better, and, as long as she liked it, perhaps it was just as well. It was a sad fact that those sisters had very little regard for each other.)

"Do, aunt," echoed Daisy: "I love to hear about such little things."

"I must be very brief, then, and only notice one or two of each group. To the family of weasels belong the polecat, the ferret, (famous for his rat-catching exploits,) the ermine, the sable, the mink and the marten,—all valuable for the sake of their fur. Of these the common weasel is most generally known. It is a very small, slender animal. The body, which is usually about

fifteen inches long, is of the same size throughout; and this, with the shortness of the limbs, gives it considerable resemblance to the snake. Its colour is brownish red above and yellowish white underneath, having the tail of the same colour as the upper parts. It is a very shy and suspicious animal; and its watchfulness and caution have given rise to the popular proverb, 'Catch a weasel asleep.' Notwithstanding this caution, however, it is as brave as a lion, seizing by the throat animals much larger than itself and keeping its hold till its prey drops from exhaustion. In defence of its nest and young it flies without hesitation at dogs and even at men; and stories have been told of troops of weasels in solitary places attacking and even killing those who ventured into their haunts; but these tales are probably greatly exaggerated. It destroys multitudes of rats, mice and moles, small birds and chickens, and sucks eggs with great relish. The sloat or ermine is a variety of the weasel and hardly to be distinguished from it, except from its greater size and its turning white in winter. When brown, it is called the sloat,—when white,

the ermine. It is found very generally all over the Northern hemisphere, and is much hunted on account of its fur, to obtain which uninjured it is shot with blunt arrows or trapped. The fur is greatly valued, and in its white state is used by kings and other great personages as a badge of rank."

"Why do certain animals turn white in cold weather, aunt?" inquired Richard. "I suppose there must be some good reason for it."

"There is, indeed, a very good reason. White substances conduct heat much more slowly than black, as has been proved by many experiments; and, as it is important, during the intense cold of a Northern winter, to preserve the animal heat as much as possible, the Great Father of all clothes the little creature in a snowy garment."

"I should think there might be another reason," observed Annie,—"in preventing animals from being so conspicuous as they would be if they travelled over the snow in their dark clothing."

"Very probably it may be so," replied Miss Winston. "The Arctic fox, the bear and many birds are examples of this kind

of transformation. A number of the smaller animals, many of which are valued for their fur, belong to the same class as the weasel, such as the marten,—of which there are several varieties,—the sable and the mink. All of these have the same general characteristics as the weasel. They are all carnivorous, but do comparatively little injury to the property of man, while they often render him very great service by destroying rats and mice, snakes and other vermin.

"The next class we shall consider is that of the viverridae, some of which seem to be allied to the cats by the form of their claws and feet. They have the tongue covered, like that of the cat, with hard sharp points; their claws are somewhat retracted in walking; they stand low upon their feet, and all have under the tail a pouch containing a greasy matter, which has often a very powerful odour. The most remarkable animal of this class is, perhaps, the ichneumon. This was one of the sacred animals of the ancient Egyptians, and was treated by them with great veneration: funds were set apart for its maintenance during life, and, like the sacred cats, it was carefully fed upon

bread soaked in milk, and minced fish, and after death its body was embalmed with great ceremony. It lives upon eggs, fowls, birds and other small animals, but has a peculiar propensity for destroying reptiles, to which, probably, it owed its distinction. Some species will readily enter into conflict with the most venomous snakes; and, though it may receive many severe bites in the battle, it is never seriously injured. It has been observed that when the animal is bitten it retreats with great quickness for a moment, and then returns to the charge; and it is believed that during this absence it finds and eats some herb which acts as an antidote to the poison; but its motions are so exceedingly rapid that the plant—if plant it is—has never been discovered.

"Many marvellous stories were formerly told about the Egyptian ichneumon,—as that it watched the crocodile, and, seizing the opportunity when the reptile opened its jaws, it sprung down its mouth, slid down its throat and destroyed the reptile by eating through its side. It is needless to say that this is a mere fable: nevertheless, the ichneumon is very destructive to the

young of the crocodile as well as to its eggs, which it searches for and eats with great eagerness, thus rendering an essential service to the inhabitants of the valley of the Nile.

"We now come to a class of plantigrade animals which contains some of the most odious of the four-footed family; and, as a near acquaintance with them is not desirable, we will merely glance at them in passing. The first genus is called Mephites; and the name is given them on account of their strong, penetrating and disgusting odour. To this genus belongs the common skunk. It is rather a pretty creature, with a modest livery of black and white, and a long and elegantly-fringed tail; and a person unacquainted with the animal, seeing it at a distance, might probably desire a nearer view. Should he approach, however, he would have cause to repent of his curiosity; for the skunk is provided with a pouch containing a liquid of the most abominable smell and penetrating quality, which it can throw to some distance. Every article upon which this liquid falls is rendered forever useless, as no pains of cleaning or washing

can destroy the smell. The skunk lives upon birds, eggs, small reptiles and mice; it also eats insects, and is fond of honey and other sweets. It is said that when kept long in captivity the offensive smell nearly or quite disappears."

"I think it is the last animal I should choose for a pet," said Sidney. "It would be worse than old Mrs. Dolan's pet pig."

"In the genus Eira, which we shall next notice," continued Miss Winston, "we shall find two quite remarkable animals,—namely, the honey-ratel and the glutton. The honey-ratel is about two feet in length, shaped like a badger, with very harsh coarse fur, and a skin so tough that the stings of the bees seem to make no impression upon it. It feeds upon all kinds of animal substances, and has been accused of making deep galleries leading into the graves of men, in order that it may devour the bodies; but its favourite feast consists of honey and bees. It has sufficient sense or instinct to act in concert with the honey-guide. This bird shows the way to the nest, which the ratel scratches open by means of his powerful claws, and the confederates make an

amicable division of the spoils. If the bird cannot find the ratel, it will invite the attention of the passing traveller, and, leading him to the nest, will patiently await his share of the booty, which is the comb containing the young bees. The colours of the ratel are gray upon the back and dark brown or black underneath.

"The gulo or glutton is a small quadruped, found only in high latitudes, as in Canada, Sweden and Poland. It is a handsome animal, with a head somewhat like a dog's, short, round ears, the body covered with a fine, soft fur, generally of a chestnut colour, but having a white band on the forehead, throat and breast. The fore-feet and part of the tail are black, and a deep-brown patch covers part of the back and loins. The glutton is one of the fiercest animals known, and its energy of purpose and action are truly wonderful. Possessed of the keenest sense of smell, he is able to detect food buried at great depths, and thus discovers the caches, or concealed depôts of provisions, belonging to the hunters. When they find one of these caches, they labour with wonderful energy and skill to

dig it up and remove the contents, in doing which they taint the provisions so that no other animal will touch them. They are also very annoying to the marten-trappers, following their trail round a circuit of forty or fifty miles, and extracting the bait from the traps, which they do by opening them from behind. Should a marten be found in the trap, they never fail to tear it in pieces or bury it in the snow at some distance from the trap. They are, as may be imagined, not very popular with the hunters, to whom they do so much damage; and many efforts are made to destroy them, but without much success, as they are too cautious to be often shot, and no trap is of any avail, as they begin behind and tear it to pieces even when substantially built of logs."

"I hope the glutton's skin is good for something when they do get it," observed Richard.

"It is, unfortunately, worth very little, and does not at all compensate for their destructive habits. But the most wonderful story remains to be told. It is said that the glutton sometimes ascends a tree, carrying in its mouth a quantity of lichen, which it drops

under a projecting branch. It then lies down, crouched and motionless, waiting patiently for a deer to pass. The animal, not suspecting the neighbourhood of his enemy, stoops to smell the moss, thus leaving his neck unprotected by his horns. As quick as lightning the glutton drops from his perch upon the shoulders of the deer, where, holding on by its strong and sharp claws, it pierces the blood-vessels with its strong canine-teeth and there hangs till the poor animal falls exhausted. Should there be a deep stream or pond near at hand, the deer always takes to it, and thus dislodges his enemy, who has a great dread of water."

"Do you believe that story, aunt?" asked Annie.

"It has been disputed by later travellers, I know," replied her aunt. "But, as Colonel Smith observes, they are those who have little or no direct knowledge of these animals in woody regions, and reason from their habits in the open, stony tracts. The story is very generally believed by hunters in America, in Siberia and Sweden; and I am inclined to imagine that it must have some foundation in truth. There is, to my

mind, nothing more wonderful in it than in the fact that the animal has sufficient sagacity to open a trap from behind, so as to extract the bait without injury to himself."

"Beavers can do that," remarked Sidney. "I read in 'Captain Bonneville' that the beaver sometimes springs the trap with a stick, and at other times pulls it into the water and buries it in the sand."

"Animals which are much hunted acquire a great degree of sagacity," observed Miss Winston, "and do certainly appear to go through a mental process very much like reasoning. Many instances might be given had we time; but I see the evening is wearing apace, and, as it is the last we can devote to our lectures, I am anxious to give you at least a general view of the ground we have not yet gone over. The raccoons and the coatis are nearly allied to the bears, and are often classed with them. They are found, the former in North the latter in South America, and are very generally diffused. The raccoon is of a dark-grayish colour, the separate hairs being tinged with different colours. The face is whitish and the tail ringed with brownish black. They

have a sharp muzzle, with intelligent, piercing eyes, a robust figure and rather slender limbs. They devour birds' eggs, fruit, and, in fact, almost every thing that comes in their way, and are very fond of dipping their food in water. They are easily domesticated and become very tame and playful."

"Besides being very mischievous," said Richard. "Mr. Barton had one which was as full of tricks as any monkey, and a terrible thief. Once they got the pies ready for Thanksgiving: you know Mrs. Barton is famous for pies——"

"I do," interrupted Sidney.

"Well, her pies were all made and arranged on a shelf in the pantry ready for dinner, and when Mrs. Barton came home from church she thought she would look in to see that all was right. The first thing she saw as she opened the door was master coon's tail vanishing through the window. He had dug a round hole in the centre of every pie and had served several loaves of cake in the same way."

"How provoking!" said Antoinette. "What did she do to him?"

Coatimondi.

The Otter. p. 457.

"That was what I asked her. 'Oh,' she said, 'I gave him what was left of them and took care to keep him chained up after that. There was no use in quarrelling with him.'"

"Well," said Antoinette, "I should like to have such a disposition. She does not look as if any thing could put her out."

"She has indeed a most lovely temper," said Miss Winston; "but she has attained it through much painful discipline and many trials.

"There are two or three varieties of raccoons, one of which subsists almost entirely upon crabs and shell-fish. The coatis are in many respects similar to the raccoons, but have the nose very large and movable, which gives them an odd expression of countenance. They live principally upon trees, but come down to the ground to search for earth-worms, which they dig up with the snout, rooting like the pig. Some species live in families of fifteen or sixteen together; others are quite solitary. One species has obtained the name of guarpi, or merry Andrew, from his ludicrously meddling, active, climbing habits

when in captivity. The coatimondi, on the contrary, is very quiet and sedate, and seems to possess more intellect than his volatile brother. At the same time, he has not so good a temper, and is apt to avenge himself for real or fancied affronts. All the coatis have a strong, disagreeable smell.

"We must now give a few moments to otters and seals,—which will finish our lecture. They are both amphibious animals, and the latter spends most of its time in the water. The river otter is deep brown, with grayish or brownish white upon the head and breast. The head is wide and flat, the eyes small, the ears small and round and capable of being partially closed. The legs are very thick, the legs very short, muscular and flexible; the feet have five sharp-clawed toes, with membranes between them; the tail is very long and muscular and probably assists the animal in swimming. The fur is short, glossy and thick. The otter lives almost entirely upon fish. It is sometimes accused of killing young lambs; but the story is not very probable. It runs upon land with tolerable speed; but it is in the water that its agility is best displayed.

It swims as fast as a fish, generally horizontally under the surface of the water, and can remain immersed a long time without inconvenience. When it catches a fish, it brings its prey to land to devour it, which it does from the shoulders down, leaving the head and tail. The otter has been tamed and taught to fish for its master; and Bishop Heber in his travels saw quite a number of tame otters which were employed to drive fish into the nets. They were fastened by strings and collars to stakes in the river-bank, and seemed to enjoy their lives amazingly. The otter becomes very much attached to those that treat it with kindness, but greatly resents any liberties taken with it by the inferior animals. Contrary to the habit of most quadrupeds, it has no objection to being lifted by the tail, but does not like to have its nose meddled with. The sea-otter is larger than the land-otter, being about four feet in length. It is clothed entirely in fine, deep, glossy fur of a chestnut colour, except the head, which is often white. It is a very bold swimmer, troops of them having been seen three hundred miles out at sea, and

when in the water it performs many antics, often balancing itself erect and holding its paw over its eyes, as if to look about it. It is found in the Northern Pacific Ocean, and has sometimes been called the sea-ape."

"Is it not possible," said Miss Taylor, "that this or some similar animal may have given rise to the stories of mermen and mermaids?"

"It is not unlikely," replied Miss Winston, —"although those tales have been generally applied to the seal; and there is really something very human in the round heads and beautiful eyes of those creatures."

"How large is a seal?" asked Daisy.

"They are of various sizes, from the elephant-seal, which attains the length of twenty to thirty feet and is sixteen feet in circumference, and the walrus, larger than the largest bull, to the common seal, which measures usually from five to six feet. In general, they are harmless to man, and, in places where they have not been taught caution by ill-treatment, even friendly. A gentleman who resided a long time in the Hebrides says of them, 'When my pupils and I were bathing,—which we

frequently did in a beautiful bay of the island called Seal Bay,—numbers of these creatures invariably made their appearance, especially if the weather was calm and sunny and the sea smooth, crowding around us at the distance of a few yards, and looking on as if they had some kind of notion that we were of the same genus with themselves. The gambols in the water of my playful companions, and their noise and merriment, seemed to excite them, and made them course round us with greater rapidity and animation.' The same gentleman says, 'In walking along the shore, of a calm and sunny afternoon, a few notes of my flute would bring half a score of them within thirty or forty yards of me, and there they would swim about with their heads above water, like so many black dogs, evidently delighted with the sound. I have frequently noted the same effect when on a boating-excursion. The sound of a common fife, blown by one of the boatmen, was no sooner heard than half a dozen would start up within a few yards, wheeling round as long as the music played, and dis-

appearing one after the other when it ceased.'

"But, while they are thus confident and friendly under favourable circumstances, they soon learn distrust and defiance; and in places where they are liable to be molested they constantly place one of their number to act as a sentinel and give warning of danger,—so that it becomes very difficult to surprise a herd of them. Many species—especially the walrus—are very helpful to each other, and if one is wounded the others will rally round him, and often succeed in rescuing him from his persecutors. Those species which practise polygamy, however, have furious battles among themselves, in which many are killed and wounded.

"The general food of the seal is fish,—though they sometimes eat sea-weed and other vegetables; and they have an extraordinary habit of devouring large stones, sometimes the size of a man's fist. It has been said that during the time when the females remain on shore for the purpose of bringing forth and suckling their young, they abstain entirely from food for six weeks or even longer. The males also keep very

long fasts, during the course of which they become very thin and weak.

"The body of the seal is wonderfully adapted to the kind of life it leads, approaching as it does the form of the fish. The fore-legs are very short, destitute of a collar-bone, and entirely hidden in the skin of the body, except the wrists and hands, the fingers of which are webbed and very powerful. The hind-legs are placed not at right angles, but parallel with the body: the feet alone have the power of motion, and are very strong and flexible.

"Seals are easily domesticated, and show considerable docility and great affection for their friends. They have been taught a variety of feats; and one, at least, learned a trick for himself. A falling-off having been observed in the milk of the cows, it was finally discovered that master seal, being fond of that beverage, was in the habit of visiting the cowhouse and helping himself. A marbled seal, which lived in the Jardin des Plantes at Paris, formed an attachment for two small dogs kept in the same enclosure with it. They would mount upon its back, bark at, and even

bite; but it never retaliated, except to tease them by slight blows of its flippers. It shared its food with them, and readily allowed them to take fish out of its mouth."

"Cannot you tell us any more stories about them, aunt?" said Antoinette, as Miss Winston paused.

"I could easily occupy another hour," said Aunt Louisa; "but it is growing late. However, if there are any points upon which you particularly desire information and upon which I have not touched, I will endeavour to enlighten you."

"I was going to ask about their young ones," said Daisy. "Are they fond of them?"

"Extremely so. They will fight desperately in their defence, and will not leave their cubs even when dead, snatching them out of the sailors' hands, diving with them, and then bringing them to the surface in their arms, as if trying to restore them to life. The male sea-bear is very fierce in protecting his offspring, and if any one attempt to take the cub they stand on the defensive, and the mother carries it off in her mouth. Should she happen to drop it,

the male instantly quits the enemy, falls upon her, and beats her against the stones till he leaves her for dead. As soon as she recovers she crawls to his feet and bedews them with her tears, while he keeps stalking about in the most insolent manner; but if the cub be carried off he melts likewise, sheds tears, and shows every mark of deep sorrow."

"I should think he might better take it himself, if he is so very fond of it," remarked Sidney, "instead of beating his poor wife."

"He is not sufficiently civilized for that," said Miss Winston. "You may observe it to be the case among savages in general that the women do all the work; and it is only as he advances in civilization that the man takes his true place as support and provider."

"And is that all, aunt? Cannot we have a little more?"

"That must be all, Sidney."

"Well," said Annie, "I had no idea that animals could be made so interesting. I am sure we are all very much obliged to you, aunt."

"When you come to make Natural His-

tory a study," observed Miss Winston, "you will find that what I have told you is only a very faint shadowing forth of the wonders which are to be found in its pages. No writer of Arabian tales or fairy stories ever imagined beings so wonderful, so beautiful and so fantastic as thousands of what are called the lower orders of the Animal Kingdom. Their numbers are beyond all calculation; their varieties exceed belief; yet every one is perfect in its kind, and provision is made for the wants of each in that element wherein it abides. From the elephant and the lion to the insect upon the rose-leaf and the little infusoria which light up the waters of the ocean, no microscope can detect any imperfection; but the further the researches of science are pushed the more cause does the naturalist see to glorify and adore Him who made the sea and all that therein is,—the earth and they that dwell thereon."

"I think," said Richard, "that the study of Natural History, when properly pursued, must make people humane towards animals."

"That is undoubtedly the proper effect

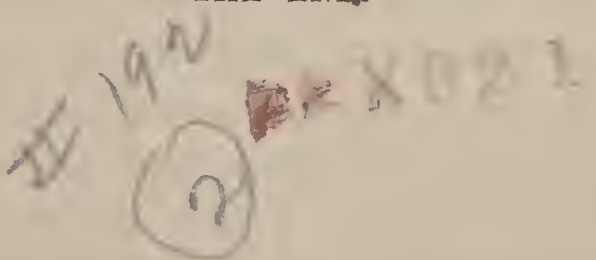
of such pursuits," replied Miss Winston; "and it is plainly to be seen both in the works and actions of the greatest naturalists. It is impossible to study the beauty and intricacy of the machinery of living creatures, and observe the pains—if we may reverently so speak—which has been bestowed upon their formation, without feeling a repugnance to wantonly destroying these wonderful organizations. Above all must we learn to reverence the wonderful and mysterious principle of LIFE, which no man can give, which defies the closest research of the wisest sages, and which forms the grand distinction between organized and unorganized bodies."

"You must have taken a great deal of pains, Aunt Louisa, to get so many facts and anecdotes together," said Matilda, as if struck by a new thought. "I am sure you never found them all in one book."

"Not in one, nor in twenty," replied Miss Winston. "It has, indeed, cost me many hours of labour to bring together and arrange the materials of these simple lectures to which you have been listening through the last few weeks. I have, after all, given you but a glimpse of the rich and varied

domain of Natural History; but, if I shall have succeeded in so interesting you as to induce you to pursue the investigation for yourselves in other directions and more at length,—above all, if I have once led you to turn your eyes from His works to Him who giveth to the beast his food and to the young ravens which cry, whose is the earth and the fulness thereof, the round world and they that dwell therein,—I shall be amply rewarded. And so, my dear children, may God bless you all, and bring us together again, if not to teach and learn of each other, yet in his presence, where is fulness of joy, and at his right hand, where are pleasures for evermore!"

THE END.



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